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Veterans Day observance honors fallen local heroes

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

CNMI dignitaries, special guests, veterans, family members, and members of the public take a moment to honor those who served and lost their lives serving their country during the 2023 Veterans Day ceremony last Saturday at the American Memorial Park.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

"A thousand may not seem like a significant number in seconds, in minutes, but in days deployed, it carries more weight. This is the

See VETERANS on Page 4

'We will try to meet retirees 25%'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios says the CNMI government will "try to appropriate" enough funds to pay the 25% voluntary payment for retiree benefits that the CNMI government has been paying since the Inos administration.

This comes soon after Settlement Fund trustee Joyce C.H. Tang reported to the federal court that the CNMI's budget for fiscal 2024 did not allocate any money for the 25% voluntary retiree benefit payment. Without it, the CNMI's retirees will

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Palacios

Palacios inclined to enact $15M line of credit bill

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios said Friday he is inclined to sign into law a bill that authorizes the CNMI government to negotiate a revolving line of credit with the Marianas Public Land Trust in the amount of $15 million, with the provision that any loan made on this line of credit must be repaid.

Palacios said he is just waiting for the attorney general's review and comments on the bill, and then he will be meeting with MPLT to go through it and see

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'Compact inequities must be fixed'

» **Kilili backs Compact renewals, but says making FAS migrants eligible for some federal programs an inequity for NMI**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Sablan

Although he supports renewing the United States' treaties with the CNMI's Micronesian neighbors, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) said making some federal programs available to Compact of Free Association citizens

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Local

CNMI VA office treats veterans to lunch

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Over 200 veterans and their families joined the CNMI Veterans Affairs Office for a special Veterans Day luncheon last Saturday at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio.

Veterans and their families were not only treated to a free meal, but were also given pool passes to PIC's waterpark for the rest of the day.

CNMI Office of Veteran Affairs program coordinator Jerad Atalig said that Saturday's event was intended to thank all veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice, "for everything they've done."

He said the celebration was also a personal one for him. "My son is a veteran. He just got out of the Air Force, so I'm really happy we get to spend the day with all our veterans in the CNMI," he said.

Atalig said planning for the event took two months, thanks in large part to the efforts of their new executive officer, Frances Sablan. "She's a veteran as well, and she told us we need to do something big this year for our veterans, and so that's what we did," he said.

CHRYSTAL MARINO

Veterans and their families and friends got to enjoy a well deserved Veterans Day on Saturday with free water park tickets at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio, courtesy of the CNMI Veterans Affairs Office.

Several veterans shared with *Saipan Tribune* the importance of support groups—that veterans don't have to face the after-effects of war alone and the gathering reminded them of their veteran family.

U.S. Army veteran Carlos Cabrera Seman told *Saipan Tribune* that the event did feel like a veteran family get-together "Thank you to all the organizers of this event because we're a lot closer as a family," he said.

Another veteran, Edward Seman Iriarte, thanked the Veterans Affairs Office for "recognizing all of us guys before, and even now, for serving our country…"

Another U.S. Army veteran, Albert Lujan, said, "It's very meaningful for veterans like myself to have people respect and understand what we've been through. We were at the [Veterans Day] memorial this morning…but then having the meal and the enjoyment and people coming up and saying thank you for your service, it just means a lot."

CHRYSTAL MARINO

To honor those who have served the country, the CNMI Veterans Affairs Office held a private lunch complimentary to veterans and their guests at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio last Saturday.

Harley Eriich said, "I really appreciate what the state VA office did and how they put this up because we've had other days like this where it was open to the public but not a lot of people came because not a lot of people knew about it. I really appreciate what they did, how they came and pulled together this event, and allowed us to be here and spend time with our family and I'm grateful."

Both Lujan and Eriich said that remembering veterans is important not just for the veterans themselves, but also for the community.

"Looking back at Vietnam, a lot of the veterans during that time were not really taken care of and not many appreciated what they did, and once you forget that, then your future generation don't see the urgency or the patriotism to sign up or do something like that, because if you don't get support for what you're doing, more than likely your future generation is not going to want to be a part of it," Eriich said.

For the fresh faces who are going to serve, Iriarte and Seman's message is: "Stand strong and serve your country proudly."

MVA general membership meeting is set for Nov. 30

The Marianas Visitors Authority will hold its biannual general membership meeting on Nov. 30, 2023, at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan at 10am. Registration will open at 9:30am.

Guest speakers will be from the MVA's off-shore offices: MVA Korea in-country manager Sejin Kim and MVA Japan in-country manager Takashi Ichikura.

"We encourage our members, community leaders, and interested members of the public to attend our general membership meeting on Nov. 30 for a detailed update on the market conditions of our two major source markets—Korea and Japan—as well as information on ongoing and upcoming marketing and promotions, our signature events, and other programs of the MVA," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "The Marianas continues to face some very challenging conditions that have hampered our full recovery since the pandemic. This meeting will give attendees the opportunity to better understand where we are as a destination and where we are headed."

The meeting cost is $35 per person for MVA members and $40 per person for non-members and include lunch and light refreshments. Payments may be made at the MVA office located at 3366 Beach Road, Suite 101, I Liyan, Saipan, or at the door. Seating is available on a first-come, first- serve basis.

The MVA welcomes businesses, organizations, and individuals to its membership. Accounts can be registered and paid on MVA's English website at www.mymarianas.com, or you may visit the MVA office. Benefits of membership include: business listing on the MVA's language-specific websites in Korean, Japanese, and English; opportunities to participate in travel and trade shows, sales seminars, and FAM tours; opportunities for business brochure distribution at MVA offices in The Marianas and internationally; detailed visitor data through monthly statistics reports; nomination and voting rights for the MVA board of directors; the opportunity to be a supplier or contractor for the MVA; and the opportunity to serve on ad hoc committees.

To RSVP for the general membership meeting, to request a membership application, or for more information, contact MVA Community Projects specialist Jack Aranda at jaranda@mymarianas.com or call 664-3200. ***(MVA)***

NMC student represents NMI at Rotary forum in Taiwan

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

A Northern Marianas College student joined the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards International Forum at the Taiwan Medical University last Oct. 28-29, 2023, representing not just Saipan's Rotaract Club but also the Northern Mariana Islands.

Richard Baleares treasures the experiences he's had at the event, saying he was able to connect and network with people from across the world.

"At the same time, the keynote speakers and the activities allowed me to improve my professional capabilities and learn things that I'd like to apply in my life," he said.

Baleares said the networking event had keynote speakers from the Boston Scientific and the American Chamber of Commerce in Taiwan, Chung-Hua Institution for Economic Research, Novartis Taiwan, and New Green Energy Taiwan. Former Disney animator Davy Liu, who founded Kendu Films, was also one of the keynote speakers.

Forum participants came from around the world including Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, Thailand, Ukraine, Denmark, France, Haiti, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Guam, and the United States.

The motto of the event was "Increase our IMPACT, Expand our REACH, Enhance participant ENGAGEMENT, and Increase our ability to ADAPT."

In breakout sessions, they discussed adaptability and impact, engagement and outreach, and how to transform plans into actions. They also shared both personal and professional experiences and exchanged ideas on these topics.

"I appreciated how I was able to connect and share my experiences with the other participants. We all come from different parts of the world and carry different perspectives on life. Some have been in their field for many years, some have just got into the workforce, and a handful (including myself) are still in college.

"Still, at the end of the forum, I'm sure we're all taking back new information and experiences that will help us in our professional careers," said Baleares "In a way, I gained an international family from this forum, and I will never forget the memories and experiences from this trip."

He added that being at the event inspired him to do more for his community. "I felt inspired to do more for myself, my family, and the community when I return home," he said.

He said the forum was also a great platform to promote the CNMI. "I would also like to give a special thank you to the Marianas Visitors Authority for donating some CNMI promotional materials for me to give away to the participants, organizers, and keynote speakers to promote our islands to our Taiwanese hosts and participants from around the world. It was a great feeling to share the beauty of the CNMI with new people, and I hope I was able to encourage them to visit our islands soon."

Baleares thanked Rotary International District 2750 assistant district governor Victor Camacho, RID 2750 past assistant district governor Wayne Santos, Rotary Club of Saipan president Irene Holl, Youth Services director Greg Borja, and Rotaract Club of the Marianas past-president/vice president Robbie Bautista.

"I would also like to thank Rep. Thomas John "TJ" Manglona, Rob Travilla, and Tribe Marianas for allowing me to borrow their CNMI flag for this trip."

He expressed gratitude to Rotarians Maggie Chien and Kelly Chen for helping him during his stay in Taiwan, and all the organizers and volunteers at RYLA International for making it a valuable and memorable experience for him.

The Rotary International District 3251 in Taipei, Taiwan organized the event and the Rotary International District 3251 and 2750 funded the trip.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Richard Baleares, of Saipan's Rotaract Club, speaks during one of the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards International Forum sessions in Taipei, Taiwan from Oct. 28 to 29, 2023.

NMC swears in new student officers

NMC

From left, Northern Marianas College president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero, Bonnie Gio Sagana, Associated Students of NMC president; Mary-Jo Camacho, ASNMC vice president; Jinkim Abogado, ASNMC secretary; Rownel "Jody" Coloma, ASNMC treasurer; and Claire Barozzo, Ariel Villagomez, and Henry San Nicolas, ASNMC senators.

Seven student officials of the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College or ASNMC were sworn in on Wednesday, Nov. 8, 2023, at the Northern Marianas College. They are Bonnie Gio Sagana, president; Mary-Jo Camacho, vice president; Jinkim Abogado, secretary; Rownel "Jody" Coloma, treasurer; and Claire Barozzo, Henry San Nicolas, and Ariel Villagomez, senators.

In his inaugural address, Sagana said he and his fellow officers will continue their endeavor to create more opportunities for the PROA family and for future generations who seek higher education at NMC.

"Through each path that I have been given in life, the No. 1 aspect that all of them have in common is the source of passion, the passion that pushed me to continue reaching heights I never knew I was capable of," he said. "As mentioned in my campaign, my team and I will continue striving for greater waves that our PROA can sail through."

During the investiture ceremony, the officers unveiled two key initiatives for the 2023-2024 academic year. ASNMC aims to bring together the student body and the community through monthly events and activities aimed at building social, emotional, physical, and mental wellness. They also plan to prepare college students to build meaningful connections in and outside of NMC.

ASNMC also hopes to cultivate student relationships for both college and upper high school classes to create a continuous connection.

ASNMC is a student-driven governance body. Its executive cabinet is composed of students elected at large by the student body to serve a one-year term in office.

This year's student government elections took place on Sept. 11 through 13, 2023. For more information about ASNMC, visit marianas.edu or email asnmc@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

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NOV 15 29
Adult Health Check
Update on personal medical history, blood pressure check, glucose check, resources & referrals
Northern Marianas College , Finasisu from 8:00AM - 11:30AM
Java Joes, Dan Dan from 8:00AM - 11:30AM
NOV 14 22
Child Health Check
For children 0-17 years old. Measurements and growth, anticipatory guidance, resources & referrals
San Vicente Youth Affairs, San Vicente from 1:00PM - 4:30PM
Han Nam Supermarket, Koblerville from 1:00PM - 4:30PM
NOV 17 21
Women's Health Check
For women who haven't seen a healthcare provider longer than 1 year, pap smears, breast exams, pre/post partum care, resources & referrals
Karidat, Dan Dan from 8:00AM - 11:30AM
Koblerville Youth Center from 1:00PM - 4:30PM
NOVEMBER IS DIABETES AWARENESS MONTH
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Palacios welcomes USS *Shoup*; expects more port calls

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios welcomed the commanding officer and crew of the U.S. Navy's guided-missile destroyer USS *Shoup*, which arrived at the Saipan Seaport's Charlie Dock last Friday.

Palacios and Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs special assistant Daniel Aquino met with USS *Shoup*'s commanding officer Dale Tourtelotte near the ship's ladder.

After briefly talking with Tourtelotte, Palacios told the media he was able to convince them to allow the media aboard the ship and get a tour of the vessel.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

USS *Shoup* commanding officer Dale Tourtellote answers questions from the media as Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs special assistant Daniel Aquino listens during a media tour aboard the ship last Friday.

Palacios himself did not board the ship. After granting the media interview, he left the seaport. He, however, is expected to return today, Monday, to tour the ship.

It was only Aquino and a staff of the Office of the Governor who joined the media in touring the ship.

Palacios said that people will be seeing more U.S. military ships make port calls in the CNMI, with the Indo-Pacific commander making a commitment to try as much as possible to have more of these port calls than in the past.

Palacios said the 350 crew of the USS *Shoup* crew are going to be on Saipan until tomorrow, Tuesday.

"So, it's going to be significant. They're going to be hanging around the island or touring the island and visiting businesses," he said.

Tourtelotte led the media in touring the ship's facilities and explaining their functions. He has been in the U.S. Navy for about 18 and a half years.

Tourtelotte, who has been in command of USS *Shoup* for two and a half years, said this is his first time on Saipan and that the crew is excited to go out and enjoy the wonderful weather and the atmosphere.

The commanding officer said it's their first time on Saipan since they joined the Seventh Fleet for about a year now.

Tourtelotte said there is a lot of going on in the Pacific and their main purpose here is just to protect the freedom of navigation and the overall prosperity of the Seventh Fleet in the Indo-Pacific region.

USS *Shoup*, which has length of 509 feet and six inches and a beam of 66 feet, is named after Medal of Honor recipient Gen. David M. Shoup, the 22nd commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps. The ship was commissioned in 2002 so it's about 21 years old.

The USS *Shoup* is an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer that has multiple mission areas.

"We've got to protect ourselves against surface vessels, air, submarines, and ballistic missiles," Tourtelotte said.

PALACIOS

From page 1

what their reactions are.

He said the legislation has been in the works for the past four to five months.

The governor said he, the MPLT board of trustees, Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan), and House of Representatives Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) already had an initial meeting about the planned line of credit, the legislative process is now done, and the legislation is on his desk for action.

The governor said the bill is now being reviewed by the attorney general to ensure legal sufficiency and they will go from there.

He said he is fine with the changes or amendments made on the original bill.

Next up will be a conversation between himself and MPLT, on where they can agree on, Palacios said.

"Hopefully, everything is going to be in order. Obviously, MPLT is making sure that they…do their due diligence, but I think we're in pretty good shape," he said.

The governor thanked the Legislature, saying this bill is critical. "Obviously, it's going to be harder if we don't have the bill, but this just to make things easier and very efficient," he added.

Last Nov. 6, the House passed the Senate's amended version of the bill.

Villagomez is the principal author of the legislation.

The bill will allow the governor to negotiate a $15-million revolving line of credit with MPLT. Any reimbursements the CNMI Department of Finance receives from the U.S. Economic Development Administration shall be used to repay the line of credit.

Rather than pledge future interest income as security, and withhold that income to settle the line of credit, the government will use EDA funds or other resources to settle each drawdown within 30 days.

As described by Rep. Blas Jonathan T. Attao (Ind-Saipan), he said that, once the governor signs the bill into law, it will allow MPLT and the administration to negotiate the terms and conditions of this line of credit, whether it's 5.5% in annual interest rate that is currently in the legislation, or 5.7%, and maybe even less.

Palacios requested this line of credit as a sort of "bridge financing or advances" for costs related to over $60-million EDA-funded capital improvement projects that the CNMI will receive.

VETERANS

From page 1

number of days we spent in the war zone in Iraq and Afghanistan."

These dramatic words, delivered by retired lieutenant colonel Franklin Babauta in his keynote address, underscored the occasion's solemnity last Saturday, when the CNMI held the annual Veterans Day celebration at the American Memorial Park to honor the CNMI's fallen war heroes.

Afghanistan-Iraq war veteran Babauta, who currently serves as the special assistant for CNMI Homeland Security and Emergency Management, paid tribute not only to all veterans, but to those who lost their lives while serving in active duty, most especially sons of the Marianas who laid their lives for the freedom Americans celebrate today.

Babauta paid tribute to his Afghanistan-Iraq war comrades and fellow island warriors SSgt. Wilgene Tudela Lieto and Cpl. Derence Weilbacher Jack, who lost their lives while serving during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"For my comrades and I, Oct. 31 hits deep and different. It is the day that will be eternally etched in our mind and hearts. It has been that way since 2005, over 18 years ago. Instead of talking about my service today, I would like to talk about SSgt. Wilgene Tudela Lieto and Cpl. Derence Weilbacher Jack. …I believe everyone should learn about and never forget their names," he said.

"SSgt. Lieto was born on Saipan and he was only 28 years old when he was killed in action when an improvised explosive device was remotely detonated under a Humvee during a patrol operation. Cpl. Jack was born on Saipan and was only 31 years old when he died instantly in the same explosion as he served as the gunner in the patrol operation where SSgt. Lieto served as the Humvee driver. The detonation claimed their lives and they were both awarded military medals for their valor and sacrifice," he added.

Babauta stated that it is his greatest honor to have served with Lieto and Jack and all those who served and laid down their lives for their islands and nation.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

COMPACT

From page 1

but not to CNMI citizens will create some inequity that must be remedied.

"This has to be acknowledged and fixed," said Sablan in his comments on H. J. Res. 96, the Compact of Free Association Amendment Act of 2023, during the U.S. House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee markup on Wednesday.

Sablan said he cannot explain to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands why Compact of Free Association citizens have access to all these federal programs under the negotiated Compact renewals and the NMI people don't.

Despite this, Sablan said he supports the negotiated renewals of the Compacts of Free Association with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands because of their importance to national security.

The delegate said there are some provisions in the agreement that must be brought up in terms of programs where COFA (Compact of Free Association) citizens will be eligible and citizens of the American territories are not.

For example, Sablan said, COFA citizens will be eligible for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program except for those who live in the CNMI. Sablan said the CNMI is the only one in the United States not eligible for TANF.

Also, COFA citizens in Guam will be eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, but not in the CNMI. "They will be eligible for SNAP throughout the country but not in the Northern Mariana Islands," Sablan said.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Birthday greetings go out to G4S general manager Moises Pangelinan from the G4S team.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

RETIREES

From page 1

only be receiving 75% of their pensions.

Technically, though, the 25% was never really supposed to reflect in the budget, said Palacios in an interview last Friday. Essentially, the CNMI government is not required to make these payments but chooses to do so when funding permits.

"It's been discretionary since [former governor Eloy S.] Inos signed the agreement. The Settlement Fund is a 75% mandate and that's our mandate, we need to meet that. As things progress, we continue to have the revenue to fund it, we will. But those are decisions that we have to make based on projections as we gain revenue. I remember [former governor Ralph DLG] Torres and even Gov. Eloy suspended it for a while because of the lack of funds to put in," he said.

How it currently works is that an account is set up specifically for the 25% voluntary retiree benefit payment and excess funds are reprogrammed to that account for disbursement, Palacios explained.

"This way, we [can] put a little bit of funds in there… and we can reprogram money when other sources of revenue come in," he said.

To date, Palacios said, the government has been fulfilling its obligations to the Settlement Fund and will inform the community if they are unable to make the discretionary 25% benefit payments.

"The Settlement Fund is being paid. As the trustee has reported, it's being paid on time; sometimes even before it's due. The 25% is there, we will try our best to make it but if we are not able to meet it, we will let the people know," he said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, Tang told the federal court that the government has voluntarily made the 25% benefit payments under the Settlement Agreement through Oct. 15, 2023. The current fiscal 2024 CNMI budget, however, did not provide for 25% benefit payments.

"Without provision in the [fiscal] 2024 CNMI budget for the 25% benefit payments equal to $12.2 million, there does not appear to be funding available to cover the 25% benefit payment," said Tang.

Also, Tang said the CNMI's 2024 budget does not fully cover certain programs like the Group Health and Life Insurance Program for retirees.

Since 2014, pursuant a Settlement Agreement between the CNMI government and local retirees (which essentially established what is known today as the NMI Settlement Fund), the CNMI government has been making a 25% voluntary benefit payment to the Settlement Fund on top of its 75% minimum annual payments. Together, the minimum annual payments and the voluntary benefit payment make up 100% of what is paid out to local retirees.

Retiree Betty Johnson sued the CNMI government in 2009 for its failure to pay the amounts it was required by law to pay to the Retirement Fund since 2005.

Johnson said the Fund would run out of money by June 2014 and would no longer be able to pay retirement benefits.

In September 2013, the parties agreed to settle the lawsuit and the federal court approved a $779-million consent judgment in case the CNMI government did not meet its obligations to the Settlement Fund.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

52 MHS Dolphins inducted into National Honor Society

By NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES
Special to the Saipan Tribune

It's a special day for 52 bright young students of Marianas High School as they were inducted into the National Honor Society last Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, at the ballroom of Hyatt Regency Saipan.

The new members who all wore white for the occasion were carefully selected by a faculty council from numerous applications this school year. Each one has to have a maintaining GPA of 3.5 or higher, taking at least one AP or honors class, have outstanding academic achievements, deep commitment to community service, and have the ability to inspire as leaders.

This school year's NHS Dolphin Chapter inductees are Ma. Ysabelle "Ysa" Achas, Webb Dunn Jr. Alano, Hilah Bacani, Lauren Bae, Michelle Chen, Arnel Josh V. Coloma, Mark Costales, Jhaylin Cruz, Mathea Jenelle Deocares, Hana Rhys Diaz, Savannah Tan Flores, Frances Louise Hernandez, Zong Yao Huang, Hayden Igisomar, Farjana Sabrina Islam, Joseph Victor Jimenez, David Jin, Zhimin Jin, Hyena Kim, Irene Kim, Joshua Kim, Min Seok (Alex) Kim, Angel Li, Iver James Lilles, Cindy Ma, Rhoana Caylee A. Macalinao, Juruel Neilan Magtalas, Audrein Jennifer Mallari, Gia Kamille Manahan, James Mercader, Diego Metran, Eunice Molina, Prapti Mondal, Jermaine "Jea" Argabioso Montenejo, Kyle Sang Hyun Moon, Koey Pan, Joseph Paraiso, Kaeli Jo Pathil, En Mei Quan, Paulo Jerome Niniano Quidato, Rizza Uvero Relucio, Gabriel Angelo Retardo, Abigael Robles, Andrew Sablan, Jayden Shin, Jonathan Sheu, Trixia Jhoanne

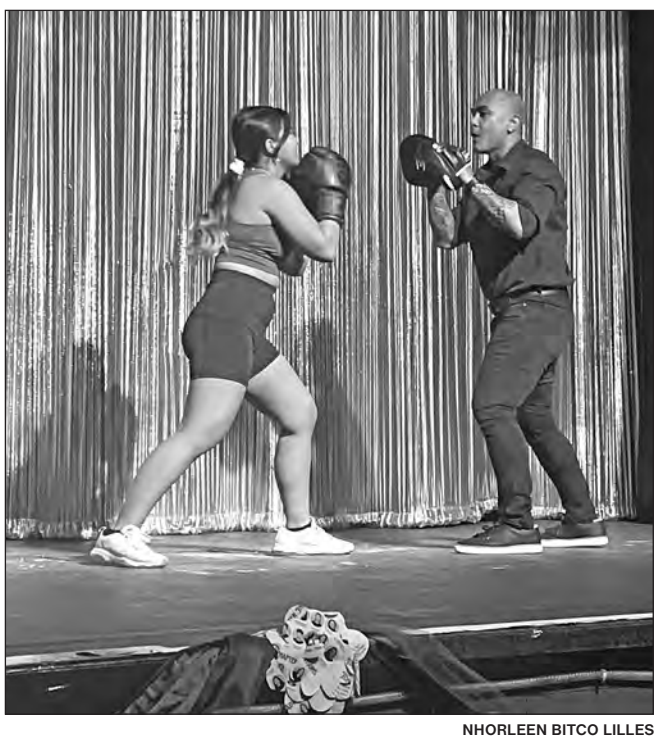
See MHS on Page 6

NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

The presentation of the 52 Marianas High School National Honor Society inductees for the school year 2023-2024 at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

Paulo Jerome Niniano Quidato prepares to chop off a pile of wood with his bare hands during the talent portion of the NHS induction ceremony.



NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

Hana Rhys Diaz shows swift boxing moves with her father Jerry Diaz during the talent portion of the NHS induction ceremony.

MHS

From page 5

Singca, Gwanpil Son, Yejin Son, Jinie Thompson, Juddah Torres, and Jenny Wu Zhang.

Senior student Jonathan Sheu expressed his delight at being inducted as a new member of NHS, "I feel really happy and honored to be accepted into the NHS." He said he plans to volunteer more in the community and serve.

Junior Jea Montenejo feels really honored that she is now part of the NHS organization and she feels that it plays such a big role in high school and has always been one of her long-time goals. "To be able to finally achieve it feels really, really good." When asked about her plans after this, she said, "I hope to expand on the four pillars of character, service, scholarship, and leadership. Definitely, with NHS gives me a lot more opportunities to do so."

NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

Keynote speaker 2021 State Teacher of the Year awardee Bonny Cruz delivers her message as the 52 inductees look on during the NHS induction ceremony.

NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

The 52 NHS inductees raise their hands during the candle-lighting ceremony.

Iver James Lilles, a junior, feels excited about being a member of NHS, "I plan to work hard to improve myself more, serve the community, and do whatever I can to serve Saipan."

The keynote speaker for the ceremony was 2021 State Teacher of the Year awardee Bonny Cruz who shared a metaphor of the outrigger canoe and its six paddlers coming from a deeply rooted Pacific islander heritage and her passion for the sport of paddling. Cruz said, "Take a moment to imagine an outrigger canoe. In this canoe, each and every one of you represents the paddlers, a vital force compelling the vessel forward. But remember you do not paddle alone, you are part of a team, a community, a society—and that's where mentorship comes in." She added, "Mentorship within the National Honor Society mirrors the dynamics of an outrigger canoe where experienced paddlers guide newer ones. Each paddler must synchronize, letting their movements find harmony in the push and pull of the water against the outrigger. Similarly, mentorship is about finding the balance in life: academic success, personal growth, character development, and emotional well-being."

Aside from receiving their respective certificate of membership and candle lighting, the event highlight was the much-awaited talent show where the inductees presented their various talents like video editing, singing, rapping, dancing, playing the uke, and solving the Rubik's cube among others. Crowd favorites were Paulo Jerome Niniano Quidato and Iver James Lilles showcasing their Karate moves and kata forms. The crowd oohed and aahed when Quidato did wood breaking with his bare hands. Hana Rhys Diaz assisted by her father, Jerry Diaz, wowed the crowd with her swift boxing moves, while Ma. Ysabelle Achas showed off her vocal prowess singing to Ed Sheeran's *Perfect* as she played the guitar. Gwanpil Son capped the talent event with an impressive magic show.

Alexis Cabrera, NHS Dolphin Chapter president, expects the new inductees to give their all every day they come to school. "Make the most of their year within NHS because we are more than just a club, we are international. We are doing so much to give back to the community and we just wanna work together to provide a better learning environment. This year we plan on doing a lot of community outreach, becoming more involved in our school, and doing more campus activities. We might also do an off-island trip if we are lucky."

The National Honor Society traces its origins back to 1921. This distinguished organization, comprised of outstanding high school students, upholds its four pillars of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Membership in the NHS also opens doors to valuable scholarship opportunities. Serving as a prestigious symbol of commitment to positive change, the NHS plays a crucial role within high school institutions.

NHORLEEN BITCO LILLES

Ma. Ysabelle Achas sings to Ed Sheeran's *Perfect* as she plays the guitar during the talent portion of the NHS induction ceremony.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
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INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
NMHC IFB 2024-002

(This ad is paid for NMHC with HUD funds)

BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME: November 13, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

200-foot Communication Tower for the Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) Project at Mt. Tapochau, Saipan

Project Package will be available on October 13, 2023, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays. A non-refundable payment of One-Hundred Dollars ($100.00) is required for each set of the project package. Payment must be made payable to NMHC and receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the project package at the reception counter.

The provisions on the NMHC Procurement regulations, NMIAC 100-60-725 AND 100-60-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference will be held at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan on **October 24, 2023, 10:00 a.m.** In addition, a Mandatory site Visit/Inspection of the project site will be conducted immediately after the Pre-Bid Conference. Failure to attend both the Mandatory Pre-bid conference and the Mandatory site Visit/Inspection will be considered a non-responsive bidder.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-9447 or via email at officemanager@nmhcgov.net during business hours, 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

/s/ Merced "Marcie" M. Tomokane
Chairwoman
NMHC Board of Directors

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

OPENING DATE: October 31, 2023 CLOSING DATE: November 15, 2023 TIME: 4:00 P.M.

NMHC JVA NO.	Positions:	Salary:
2024-001	CDBG-DR Administrative Specialist	$25,000.00-$30,000.00 - per annum- UNGRADED
2024-002	CDBG-DR Account	$25,000.00-$30,000.00 per annum- UNGRADED

Employment application form, detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be accessed at www.nmhcgov.net or www.cnmi-cdbgdr.com.

Applicants may submit their applications through the following options: Submission at the at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan; or at the Drop Box located in front of the NMHC Central Office building; or email application and documents to officemanager@nmhcgov.net.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Office Manager, at (670) 234-6866/9447or by email to officemanager@nmhcgov.net. NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/
Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Amata welcomes committee passage of COFA Pacific priority

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Delagate Uifa'atali Amata (R-AS) is welcoming House Natural Resources Committee passage of the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2023, H.J. Res 96, which she cosponsored, as a key priority in U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region.

In his closing, chair Bruce Westerman (R-AR), said he would work with Pacific Islands members of Congress on specific issues they had raised, "I look forward to working with Ms. Radewagen and Mr. Moylan on issues that are important to the islands they represent and their constituents…"

Amata took part in the markup Wednesday on the legislation that approves the recently negotiated Compacts of Free Association (COFAs), building on America's unequivocal commitment to deterring malign Chinese influence in the region.

Amata said, "As a representative of Pacific islands peoples of America in Congress, I proudly voted in favor of the motion to report the COFA renewal legislation for approval by the full House. I want to thank Committee chairman Westerman for his leadership on COFA renewal.

"We also are grateful to chairman Westerman for his understanding and willingness to consider my requests to work together with our territorial affairs Subcommittee Chair Hageman on local constitutional and legal status issues of great import to our fellow Americans in my small and remote island home American Samoa, the center of U.S. national homeland interests in the South Pacific.

From 2019 to 2023, Amata said it was the goal of President Joe Biden and Congressional leadership to ratify Compact of Free Association renewal agreements with Palau, FSM and RMI by Oct. 1 of this year. That's when the economic assistance and program funding that sustains political relations and strategic defense rights under the Compacts expired.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Compacts of Free Association legislation markup in the Natural Resources Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"Because current Continuing Resolution funding levels are not sustainable, approving Compact renewal agreements is a giant step to continue a seven-decade regional security partnership under the Compact that China's government actively tried to disrupt in 2018 through 2020. The people of America and our allies in the region and around the world will be served well by the $7.1 billion 20 year terms for COFA renewal that will strengthen our partnership with our closest allies in the Pacific.

Amata said for bringing this major legislative project forward at this time, in addition to Westerman people of the Pacific islands would like to thank ranking member Grijalva, Subcommittee chair Hageman and Subcommittee ranking member chair Leger Fernandez.

"As chair of the Committee's Bipartisan Indo-Pacific Task Force, I want to thank co-chair Kilili Sablan for his wisdom and fairness. The mission of the task force was assisted as well by those members of the bicameral and bipartisan staff working group who answered the call of duty to do the legislative work we needed while leadership determined policy."

Amata added that the Senate and House working group staff was assisted by cooperation from Special Presidential Envoy Yun and his team at NSC, Defense, Interior and State, who were generous sharing expertise when needed most to get the job done.

"Finally, I would like to make special note of the provisions of H.R. 96, the amended COFA, and its related agreements, that will enable the U.S. to continue to act under U.S. federal law, based on Congressional authorization and oversight, to meet U.S. commitments and obligations to the people of the RMI still impacted by the effects of the U.S. nuclear testing program."

At a time when some in the U.S. government don't seem to understand the political, social, economic, and cultural consequences of continued dislocation of whole communities from their homelands for decades, the American Samoa delegate said H.R. 96 recognizes that the settlement of litigation in U.S. courts over specific claims based on facts known at that time does not end the mandate of COFA and the Section 177 Agreement, which does not expire without RMI consent.

"That 1985 claims settlement as confirmed and renewed by the U.S. with increased compensation in 2003, expressly authorizes additional programs and activities as may be mutually agreed. Now the provisions of H.R. 96 confirm that the Section 177 Agreement will continue and work in tandem with the RMI COFA Trust Fund Committee use of its resources to address on an on-going basis mitigation of the injury to persons and damage to land caused by the U.S. nuclear testing program."

She said both Section 177 and COFA Trust Fund are international agreements in full effect and also U.S. domestic law. So, the COFA administering agencies and Congressional committees designated in the COFA Act will ensure the Section 177 Agreement mechanisms and the 2023 Amended COFA and COFA Trust Fund mechanisms work together.

"The purposes of both include providing food security, radiological monitoring and remediation, compensation determined owing by RMI, health care for communities affected by radiation exposure and continued dislocation, resettlement of homelands if and when safe, and programs for political, economic, social and cultural recovery and cohesion."

Amata added that it's also worth mentioning Section 177 and COFA Trust Fund implementation at length because the U.N. Security Council authorized and had oversight of U.S. actions through the nuclear testing program from 1947 to 1958. Both the U.N. and the U.S. ultimately should and I believe will formally apologize to the RMI for the harm done to our allies.

"Because there remain issues of science, public health, law and moral responsibility that remain unresolved, the Section 177 Agreement and the 2023 COFA Trust Fund provisions related to the affected communities are in the nature of a political settlement that can be implemented only as determined to serve the best interest of the U.S. and RMI... So, a settlement of legal claims nearly 40 years ago, upheld by five federal appellate court rulings, is part of the COFA nuclear testing package, but lawyers and a legal settlement that cannot be reopened unless the U.S. abandons its obligations thereunder does not impose much less control policy for U.S. and RMI mutual agreement on measures that need to be taken to keep our promises."

Earlier this year, Westerman created the bipartisan Indo-Pacific Task Force, led by Task Force chairman Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen of American Samoa, and co-chairman Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan of CNMI, working directly with these topics in conducting congressional oversight on issues facing the U.S. Pacific Territories and the FAS.

In August, Amata took part in Westerman's Congressional Delegation of nine members to the region to see firsthand and hear from local communities, to further understand the threat of the People's Republic of China under the Chinese Communist Party, in which they visited and met with leaders from the three FAS nations. The U.S. has a unique and close relationship with the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, all of vital importance to the U.S. given their history, partnership and geostrategic location in the South Pacific. ***(PR)***

Safe and sane consumer fireworks once again legal in Guam

GUAM—Guam families will have a blast at their next gathering as "safe and sane" consumer-grade fireworks are once again legal on the island, thanks to a bill authored by Democrat Senator Dwayne T.D. San Nicolas being signed into law on Nov. 10, 2023, by the governor.

"Today, I am thrilled to share the good news that Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero has signed Bill 9-37 into Guam law, allowing island residents to once again use consumer fireworks safely," said San Nicolas. "I want to thank the island's chief executive, my legislative colleagues and cosponsors who voted to pass the bill, allowing me to fulfill my promise to the people of Guam, and that 12-year-old child from a long time ago to legalize safe and sane consumer fireworks. Now, we can all celebrate safely like our brothers and sisters in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. We share the same demographic, same culture, same language, and now the same means to celebrate."

Bill 9-37, now known as Public Law 37-47, legalizes and regulates the use of consumer fireworks in Guam.

This law will not just generate new business opportunities for Guam but allow the community to use real and safe consumer fireworks at their next gathering with family and friends, according to San Nicolas.

"As we know, minors would steal their parents' firearms and shoot them in the air as a substitute for fireworks during celebrations, which is illegal and far more dangerous. Legalizing consumer fireworks will no longer force our youth to resort to firearms, ending concern for public safety and security at gatherings," he said. "In addition to enhancing familial get-togethers, the law will create new avenues for entrepreneurs to capitalize on the need to import and sell these fireworks, contributing to the island's economy."

With the bill being signed into law, San Nicolas advises the community to practice safe usage of consumer fireworks year-round.

It was passed by the 37th Guam Legislature with nine votes on Oct. 31, 2023, during legislative session at the Guam Congress Building in Hagatna. The eight other senators who joined San Nicolas in voting to pass the bill were vice speaker Sen. Tina Muna Barnes and Sens. Joe S. San Agustin, Roy A.B. Quinata, Amanda Shelton, William Parkinson, Christopher Duenas, Jesse Lujan, and Thomas Fisher.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Guam Sen. Dwayne T.D. San Nicolas poses with Guam Gov. Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero after the latter signed Bill 9-37 into Public Law 37-47 that legalized and regulated the use of consumer fireworks in Guam.

The bipartisan legislation is co-sponsored by Speaker Therese Terlaje, Barnes, San Agustin, Quinata, Parkinson, Lujan, and Fisher. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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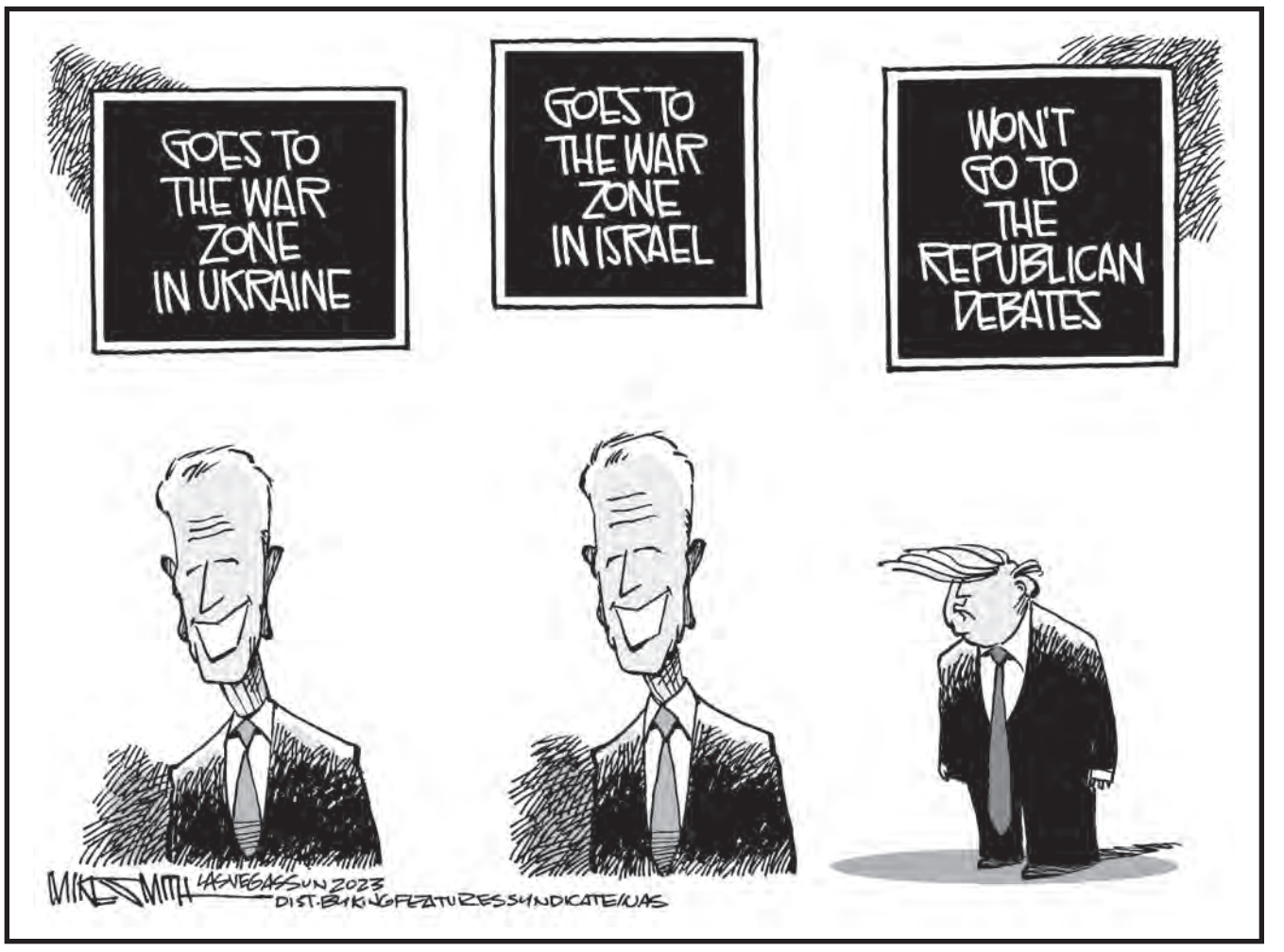
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EDITORIAL

Thanks to Ohio, people who value reproductive rights have another victory

Ohio voters on Tuesday overwhelmingly approved Issue 1 at the ballot, making it the sixth state to either pass a constitutional amendment protecting abortion access or reject a measure that would have specified the state constitution does not protect abortion rights. A seventh state, Montana, rejected a"born-alive" initiative that would have mandated life-saving care to a fetus born alive after a later-term abortion or a baby born with such severe health problems that it would not be able to survive.

It's a remarkable achievement, and not just because Ohio is a politically conservative state. Antiabortion state legislators tried to block Issue 1 from passing with a sneaky ballot measure in August that would have raised the vote threshold for passage of constitutional amendments (like Issue 1) to 60% from a simple majority. Supporters of reproductive rights had to fight back against a campaign of misinformation.

Abortion also figured into outcomes in other elections around the country, notably in two states where it seems conservative state legislatures are at odds with their constituents on this issue. In the very red state of Kentucky, voters reelected Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear, who strongly criticized his Republican challenger for supporting the nearly total abortion ban in that state with no exceptions for rape or incest. One Beshear campaign ad featured a young woman who was raped by her stepfather and became pregnant but later miscarried.

And Democrats in Virginia took control of the state Legislature, campaigning on abortion rights. The state's Senate Democratic Caucus Chair Mamie Locke exulted in a statement, "We have thwarted MAGA Republicans' attempt to take total control of our government and our bodies."

In election after election since the Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade in June 2022, obliterating the constitutional right to abortion, voters of various parties in red, blue and purple states have made it resoundingly clear that they want the right to control their own bodies and that the choice to continue a pregnancy should be theirs to make, not some state legislator's.

That is a message that all elected officials should heed as we head into the 2024 elections. So far voters in elections where abortion is an issue have made it clear that they care deeply about keeping this right in the states where they live—no matter whom they voted for in the last presidential election.

Will voters and candidates keep that in mind in 2024? This will be the first presidential election since Roe was overturned. In 2020, voters had the luxury of holding fuzzy views, or none at all, on abortion. Their rights were largely protected by the Roe decision, which blocked states from banning abortion though they could pass laws making access difficult.

Presidential candidates who oppose abortion are no doubt shaken (or should be) by this unbroken string of victories for reproductive rights in state elections and may soften their messaging for some audiences. Even Donald Trump, running for reelection, wouldn't say on"Meet the Press" if he supported

See THANKS on Page 9

After a cease-fire in Gaza, there is only one answer for what happens next

By DAOUD KUTTAB
Los Angeles Times

Daoud Kuttab is a Palestinian journalist and a former professor of journalism at Princeton University.

The Americans, the Israelis and the Palestinians are in a bind. No one knows who will govern Gaza after a cease-fire, when it comes. The Palestinian leadership in the West Bank city of Ramallah is not willing to enter Gaza on the back of Israeli tanks and without the agreement of Palestinian fighters there. No one else will either. Jordan's prime minister has categorically denied that his country would play such a role, and the same will hold for almost any other Arab or international force.

While Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas told the president of Venezuela that Hamas' Oct. 7 attack does not represent the Palestinian people, he has also made it clear that he is open to reconciliation dialogue with the political leadership of Hamas. Ironically, given America's all but total support of Israel, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken has opposed the idea of prolonged Israeli rule over Gaza and said that Palestinians should govern the Palestinian enclave.

This means that the answer for the question of what happens next should be clear. The Palestine Liberation Organization, which doesn't include Hamas, needs to forge an agreement with Hamas and other Palestinian factions in Gaza.

The PLO's executive committee, of which Abbas is the current chair, should be expanded to include individuals close to or nominated by Hamas. Similarly, the Palestinian Authority, which rules in the West Bank, should be reconstituted as an expanded emergency national unity government in which all Palestinian factions are part of a collective power-sharing arrangement.

The idea of including Hamas or someone appointed by Hamas to be part of a solution to the current cycle of violence might seem anathema to many, but it is the only effective and logical way forward after a cease-fire. It ought to be demanded by the international community and even by Israel as a means to guarantee the stability needed for rebuilding Gaza and for entering serious negotiations that can produce an independent Palestinian state.

International diplomacy is full of cases in which groups publicly categorized as terrorist organizations are somehow finessed and accommodated. Whether we look at South Africa's African National Council, Ireland's IRA or even the pre-state Jewish underground organizations, all were labeled terrorist, yet they were included in peace talks.

When former Secretary of State James Baker couldn't get Israel's hard-line Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to accept the participation of Jerusalem Palestinians in the 1991 Madrid Peace Conference, the U.S. agreed to the creation of a steering committee headed by those very Palestinians. The steering committee chose the delegation that did participate in the talks.

On the eve of Sept. 13, 1993, when President Clinton hosted PLO Chairman Yaser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for the signing of the Declaration of Principles (the Oslo 1 Agreement), the PLO was considered a terrorist organization.

The international community, including Western countries, regularly meets and engages with the Lebanese government, even though the latter has Hezbollah members in its cabinet.

And American officials have found ways to deal with the Taliban despite what happened on Sept. 11, 2001. On July 31, Taliban representatives and U.S. representatives met officially for the first time since the American withdrawal from Afghanistan, with the aim of moving toward recognition of the Taliban government and the unfreezing of Afghan state assets.

A power-sharing Palestinian government would not only govern Gaza along with the West Bank, it would be crucial to the beginning of talks aimed at fulfilling the international consensus that there must be a Palestinian state alongside the state of Israel.

Despite Israeli hasbara— PR— Hamas' current charter, amended in 2017, moderates language in the original. While it does not recognize Israel, Hamas leaders have publicly accepted two states, including on Nov. 1 when the group's leader, Ismail Haniyeh said in a televised address: "We are ready for political negotiations for a two-state solution with Jerusalem as the capital of Palestine."

The so-called Prisoners' Document, written in 2006 by the leaders of the main Palestinian faction who were then imprisoned in Israel, sets a road map for such negotiations. In it, Hamas indicated a willingness to have the PLO negotiate for it with Israel, with the stipulation—which seems fair—that any agreement would be put to a vote of all Palestinians.

The idea of an expanded Palestinian government with any hint of Hamas being part of it will certainly be opposed by Israel, but it is a sovereign Palestinian decision that is not and should not be open for negotiation or a veto by any power.

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Unintended pregnancies are an economic issue

By SARAH GREEN CARMICHAEL
Bloomberg Opinion

Sarah Green Carmichael is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist and editor. Previously, she was an executive editor at* Harvard Business Review.

Ohio voters on Tuesday passed a measure enshrining the right to abortion in the state's constitution. The outcome, the latest in a string of ballot-measure victories for reproductive freedom in conservative-leaning states, was an affirmation of women's right to make decisions about their own bodies. The people who read political tea leaves for a living are saying the abortion issue may help Democrats overcome voters' persistently bad feelings about the economy.

Although abortion is often talked about as the archetypal culture war battle—in contrast to so-called "kitchen table" concerns like inflation—whether and when to have children is one of the biggest economic decisions a woman can make. New research highlights just how important reproductive autonomy is to women's earning power. Unintended pregnancies have a lasting and harmful effect on women's careers, a study led by economists at the University of Chicago found.

The scholars used Swedish administrative data to look at what happened to women who got pregnant while using long-acting, reversible contraception, such as an IUD or an implant. Although this happens in only about 1% of users, that's still a lot of pregnancies. In 2017, about 10% of women in the US who were using contraception had an IUD or implant. At a 1% failure rate, that would be almost 50,000 unplanned pregnancies a year.

In the study of Swedish women, about three-quarters of women whose contraception failed went on to give birth. The impact was clear. "We find that unplanned pregnancies have substantial, negative, and lasting consequences on the careers of previously childless women," the authors write. Seven years later, these women have a 20% lower chance of being in a skilled occupation. Women ages 22 to 27 were earning about a third less than they otherwise would have been earning; women over 28 were earning about 13% to 16% less.

Using the administrative data allowed the researchers to track women of similar backgrounds for several years before and after the random failure of their birth control method. "We can see these women on similar paths, and then the paths just diverge when one group of them gets pregnant," says Juanna Schrøter Joensen, an economist at the University of Chicago and a co-author of the study.

Planned pregnancies, by contrast, had much smaller economic downsides. Women who were able to delay pregnancy until a time of their choosing experienced only half the earnings penalty of those who became pregnant by accident. It did not reduce their likelihood of advancing to a skilled occupation.

Unplanned pregnancies are especially costly because they're more likely to happen when women are younger. They make it harder to switch to higher-earning industries and stop women from moving into management positions and other higher-paying roles. Pregnancies that interrupt education are especially expensive, costing women 37% to 39% of future earnings.

Although abortion is readily available in Sweden and covered by the national health plan until 18 weeks of pregnancy, only about one in four women in the study chose to terminate. Those who did tended to earn a bit less and be in lower-skilled jobs. (There was no meaningful difference by age.) After the abortion, their careers continued largely as if the pregnancy hadn't happened. (1)

But that wasn't the case for the women who went on to give birth. Essentially, an unplanned birth freezes a woman's economic potential. She never finishes that graduate degree. She doesn't move to that bigger job. She doesn't have the same chances to discover what she's really good at.

On the flip side, women who get pregnant on purpose generally wait until their careers are more established. While motherhood can hurt their earnings—even in egalitarian Sweden—the impact is much smaller. And when women delay pregnancy until they're older, the career downsides are minimal.

There are some limitations to the research. Most notably for our purposes here, the data is drawn from Sweden, where parents share 16 months of paid leave, universal health care and subsidized child care. It's possible that motherhood penalties would be even higher in countries without these supports, such as the US.

Nonetheless, the study highlights that economic opportunity rests on a foundation of bodily autonomy. If you can't control when you give birth you will have a much harder time exerting control over the rest of your life.

More than 20 years ago, Nobel Prize-winning economist Claudia Goldin showed that the introduction of the birth control pill had a transformative effect on women's careers. But today, as the abortion debate plays out in state after state across the US, it's worth remembering that no method of contraception is perfect. Elective abortion will always be a vital option. Voters in Ohio—and before them, Kentucky, Kansas, Michigan and Montana—have shown they know that.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Cut costs and find new revenue

The recent bill to increase taxes on each soda and alcoholic beverage container has generated a lot of opposition, which tells me there should have been a public hearing before taking this desperate measure.

While I understand Rep. Flores and the House for trying to generate new revenues, this was not the way to do it, as it isn't enough to make a real difference economically and everyone has already been adversely affected by the increase in the cost of living in too many ways to mention.

The first rule in taxation is "never put more taxes on the people than they can bear," which even has a Biblical origin that says "God won't put any more on you that you can bear." In fact, it was taxation from England without representation that created the American Revolution—the Boston Tea Party!

This tax bill is just like the casino bill that disrespected people. They should have been looking for new revenue sources on Day I, but instead they only focused on cutting cost, which is why I asserted that our leaders need to learn how to chew gum and walk at the same time—cut cost and find new revenues.

Raising taxes without a public hearing is disrespectful and avoids doing the real work of generating new revenue sources. I've been trying to get our leaders in the House of Representatives and Senate to attend the international hemp expo this month, which offers the opportunity for the CNMI to directly interact with major hemp investors to promote the CNMI as an American destination for hemp production and manufacturing. I don't have to tell readers what a new industry that is not labor intensive but AI-driven with high paying jobs can do for the CNMI. But as usual, it's Ambrose's idea so the idea was shot down, yet the hemp industry has been legalized and nothing is being done to get the industry started nearly four years after becoming law! Maybe one day, our leaders will start listening to Ambrose on how to be great citizens and public officials. Drop the ugly racist politics, revenge, and denial of the truth that has only served to stall and prevent economic and social progress, which ends up hurting people, like we see with this tax hike on soda and liquor!

The governor is right about chasing IPI for the money they owe the CNMI but I think the Casino Commission is helping IPI to stall. They are also going at it wrong by trying to get money, as the CNMI should be trying to attain partial ownership of the IPI hotel/casino. IPI can't delay the transfer of IPI stock to the CNMI in court for debts as the buildings are, there, unlike the money they don't have. Heck, there has never been a lawsuit filed by the Casino Commission for our money that amounts to $77 million, which tells me the commission is stringing things out on purpose just to keep getting their big salaries for meeting only once or twice a month. If we can go to the moon and other planets, I'm sure we can learn how to catch butterflies in the CNMI.

Let the governor take control with an executive order to negotiate with the power of being a partner with IPI and temporarily retire the Casino Commission until there is an operating casino, as it's a waste of money when the commission is only doing settlement work. The governor only needs the commission's attorney to negotiate and collect what is due while transitioning the casino/hotel into a productive operation, as opposed to this never-ending legal drama for money IPI does not have. We are talking about $64 million owed the government and $77 million owed people that amounts to more than our budget ($141 million), which is far better than raising taxes on soda and liquor. This is too much money to just be chasing butterflies, as we can get IPI stocks to sell immediately and/or keep some of the stock for a future new continuous revenue source once IPI's operation is functioning again. We must devise a real plan to end this quickly and finish the eyesore hotel/casino. Instead of complaining about taking down a crane, they should literally be fighting with teeth and nails to take down all the Chinese symbolism, which is one of the prime reasons preventing the Japanese from returning as our primary tourist market.

The CNMI needs real reforms, not taxes and butterfly nets, in the way our leaders are doing things. The House is even sitting on a bill that would give NMDs tens of millions, but instead the House chooses to focus on raising taxes their people don't have the ability to pay.

The business sector is even against this tax, even though they won't pay the tax; it will be passed on to their customers. Wake up and initiate the economic reforms we need as we need you to be better stewards of our Commonwealth.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III, Saipan

THANKS

From page 8

a federal ban on abortion, and he called the Florida six-week abortion ban, instituted by his main rival Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, "a terrible mistake" without saying whether he would support an abortion limit.

This is absurd. Trump can have amnesia about his past antiabortion actions, but voters shouldn't. In his time in office, he appointed three antiabortion Supreme Court justices who were instrumental in overturning Roe vs. Wade. Trump is largely the reason why people do not have a national constitutionally guaranteed right to abortion. If he were to win, and both the Senate and House of Representatives were to become Republican-controlled, a federal ban on abortion could all too easily become a reality. Voters should remember that when they cast ballots next year.

But for the moment, we cheer the voters, politicians and tireless advocates who stood up for their reproductive rights on Tuesday. There should be little doubt that people across the country value their bodily autonomy and want it out of the hands of their state legislators.

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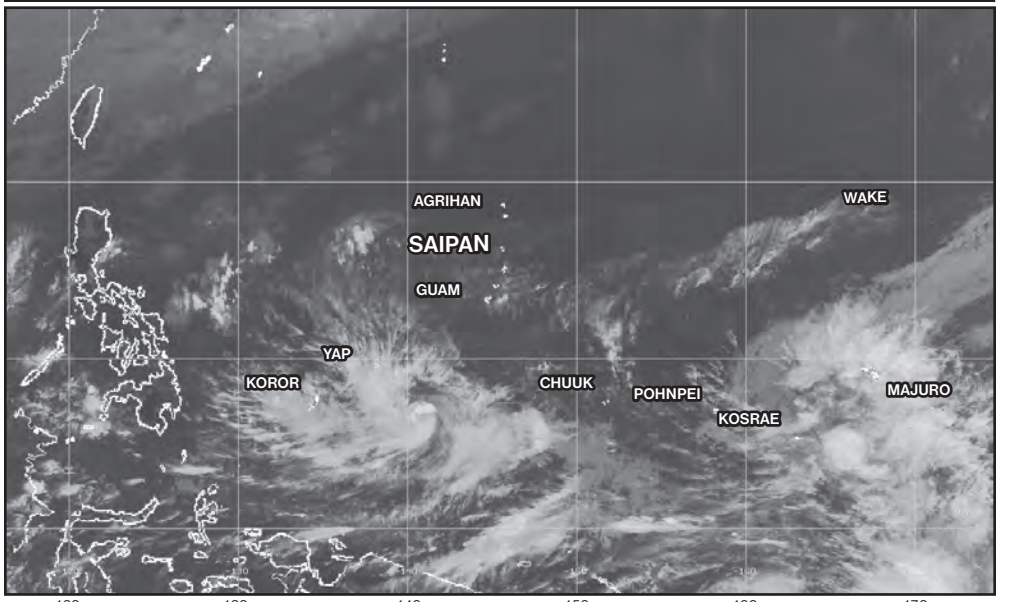
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Breezy. Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly sunny with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Breezy. Partly sunny with a 50 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
87 / 78°	87 / 78°	87 / 78°	87 / 78°	87 / 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 9:37 AM, SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Radar and satellite imagery shows a band of showers just entering the area east of Guam. The band is thin and should only bring scattered showers to Guam and Guam Coastal Waters this morning and through the afternoon. Observations indicate frequent peak wind gusts in the mid 20 knot range. Sounding data and vad winds also show winds up to 25 knots in the lower levels. Expect frequent gust to 25 knots and higher so issue a small craft advisory for at least today.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:17 AM	5:44 PM
Tuesday	6:17 AM	5:44 PM
Wednesday	6:18 AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:18 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:19 AM	5:44 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:52 AM	5:31 PM	-
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:18 PM	-
Wednesday	7:47 AM	7:10 PM	-
Thursday	8:48 AM	8:08 PM	-
Friday	9:49 AM	9:10 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Fair	70° / 53°
Beijing	Fair	43° / 28°
Hong Kong	Fair	77° / 72°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	85° / 75°
London	Mostly Cloudy	57° / 50°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	67° / 57°
Manila	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	81° / 72°
New York	Fair	56° / 44°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	64° / 46°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	61° / 48°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	61° / 45°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	68° / 50°
Salem	Sunny	79° / 59°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	59° / 51°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	54° / 34°
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 48°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	78° / 52°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:23 AM	Low Tide	-0.19
8:06 AM	High Tide	1.71
1:32 PM	Low Tide	0.93
6:48 PM	High Tide	1.77

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	7:50PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:55PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:40AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	2:15AM	6:10AM	Daily
7C3403	4:40AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:45AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA189	00:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6
PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	00:40AM	8:45AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:15PM	3:30PM+1	Daily

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily
TW307	7:45PM	1:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:15PM	3:35AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 30, 2023

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Oct 21-31, 2023
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Biden, Xi will meet Wednesday for talks on trade

» Taiwan, fraught US-China relations also on agenda

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet Wednesday in California for talks on trade, Taiwan and fraught U.S.-Chinese relations in the first engagement in a year between the leaders of the world's two biggest economies.

The White House has said for weeks that it anticipated Biden and Xi would meet on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco, but negotiations went down to the eve of the gathering, which kicks off Saturday.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said in a statement the leaders would discuss the "continued importance of maintaining open lines of communication" and how the they "can continue to responsibly manage competition and work together where our interests align, particularly on transnational challenges that affect the international community."

China's Foreign Ministry said in a statement Friday that Xi would attend APEC from Tuesday to Friday at Biden's invitation and would take part in the U.S.-China summit.

Two senior Biden administration officials, who earlier briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity under ground rules set by the White House, said the leaders would meet in the San Francisco Bay area but declined to offer further details because of security concerns. Thousands of protesters are expected to descend on San Francisco during the summit.

AP

U.S. President Joe Biden, right, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands before a meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit meeting on Nov. 14, 2022, in Bali, Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng met for a second day of talks on Friday in San Francisco, the latest in a string of senior level engagements between the nations in recent months aimed at easing tensions.

Yellen said that during the talks she emphasized that the U.S. seeks a healthy economic relationship with China. She called on China to crack down on private Chinese firms and financial institutions that the U.S. believes are skirting international sanction to do business with Russia and she raised concerns about Chinese export controls on graphite in other critical minerals. Graphite is a key raw material in electric vehicle batteries.

Yellen, who visited China in July, said she accepted an invitation to make a return trip to Beijing next year.

"There is no substitute for in-person diplomacy," said Yellen, who added that she believed the two laid the groundwork for a productive meeting between Biden and Xi. "During our discussions, we agreed in-depth and frank discussions matter, particularly when we disagree."

The Biden-Xi meeting is not expected to lead to many, if any, major announcements, and differences between the two powers certainly won't be resolved. Instead, one official said, Biden is looking toward "managing the competition, preventing the downside risk of conflict and ensuring channels of communication are open." The officials said they believed it would be Xi's first visit to San Francisco since he was a young Communist Party leader.

The agenda includes no shortage of difficult issues.

Differences in the already complicated U.S.-Chinese relationship have only sharpened in the last year, with Beijing bristling over new U.S. export controls on advanced technology; Biden ordering the shooting down of a Chinese spy balloon after it traversed the continental United States; and Chinese anger over a stopover in the U.S. by Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen earlier this year, among other issues. China claims the island as its territory.

Biden will also likely press Xi on using China's influence on North Korea, during heightened anxiety over an increased pace of ballistic missile tests by North Korea as well as Pyongyang providing munitions to Russia for its war in Ukraine.

The Democratic president is also expected to let Xi know that he would like China to use its burgeoning sway over Iran to make clear that Tehran or its proxies should not take action that could lead to expansion of the Israel-Hamas war. His administration believes the Chinese, a big buyer of Iranian oil, have considerable leverage with Iran, which is a major backer of Hamas.

Biden and Xi last met nearly a year ago on the sidelines of the Group of 20 summit in Bali, Indonesia. In the nearly three-hour meeting, Biden objected directly to China's "coercive and increasingly aggressive actions" toward Taiwan and discussed Russia's invasion of Ukraine and other issues. Xi stressed that "the Taiwan question is at the very core of China's core interests, the bedrock of the political foundation of China-U.S. relations, and the first red line that must not be crossed in China-U.S. relations."

The Chinese foreign ministry said this time Biden and Xi would focus on "in-depth communications on the strategic, overall and directional issues of the China-US relations as well as major issues concerning world peace and development."

Next week's meeting comes as the United States braces for a potentially bumpy year for U.S.-Chinese relations, with Taiwan set to hold a presidential election in January and the U.S. holding its own presidential election next November.

Beijing sees official American contact with Taiwan as encouragement to make the island's decades-old de facto independence permanent, a step U.S. leaders say they don't support. Under the "One China" policy, the U.S. recognizes Beijing as the government of China and doesn't have diplomatic relations with Taiwan, but it has maintained that Taipei is an important partner in the Indo-Pacific. Biden intends to reaffirm the U.S. wants no change in the status quo, one official said.

Yellen: Talks with Chinese finance chief laid groundwork for Biden's meeting with Xi

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said Friday that she and her Chinese counterpart agreed to work toward a "healthy economic relationship," during two days of talks that she said helped lay the groundwork for a productive meeting next week between President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Yellen said many disagreements remain between the two countries, but she and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng committed to working together "on global challenges, from debt issues to climate change-related economic issues."

And both countries, she said, "welcome the objective of a healthy economic relationship that provides a level playing field for companies and workers in both countries and benefits the two peoples."

She added that she plans to return to China next year after making her first trip there as treasury secretary in July.

Biden and Xi will meet Wednesday on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco, the first engagement in a year between the leaders of the world's two biggest economies.

Their finance chiefs held talks in San Francisco this week with the aim of making progress on a slew of economic and trade issues at a time when competition has markedly intensified between their countries.

A Treasury Department readout of the meetings said both sides agreed to increase communications on economic issues and emphasized a commitment not to break economic ties.

"Our mutual desire, both China and the United States, is to create a level playing field and ongoing, meaningful and mutually beneficial economic relations," Yellen said. "That is our main focus."

Yellen has met with a host of Chinese officials throughout this year.

In January, she had her first face-to-face meeting with former Vice Premier Liu He in Zurich. She traveled to China in July to discuss economic policies between the nations and urged Chinese government officials to cooperate on climate change and other global challenges and not let sharp disagreements about trade and other irritants derail relations.

Nonprofits making progress in tackling homelessness among veterans

ATLANTA (AP)—Along a busy Atlanta residential road, a 68-year-old Vietnam War-era Army veteran has found what he calls a "match made in heaven."

Harold Tilson Jr. found himself homeless earlier this year but for the past few months has been living in transitional housing run by the nonprofit Veterans Empowerment Organization, or VEO. It provides emergency and permanent housing for dozens of previously homeless military veterans.

"If you're homeless and you need help, you couldn't ask for a better place to go because they take care of just about everything," Tilson said.

It's part of a years-long effort by government agencies and nonprofits around the country to address homelessness among veterans. Since January 2020, the numbers of homeless veterans have fallen 11% and have gone down 55% over the past 13 years, according to a government count. That's in sharp contrast with the general homeless population.

Authorities credit the Obama administration's work to make housing veterans a top priority and more recently the $1.9 trillion coronavirus relief package that boosted the Department of Veteran Affairs' homeless programs and expanded rental aid. Advocates also point to partnerships between government agencies, nonprofits and corporate foundations.

Last month, the VA gave $1 billion in grants to community nonprofits for the upcoming year to tackle the issue, the most ever, said Jill Albanese, director of clinical operations at the Veterans Health Administration's Homeless Programs Office.

"This isn't something that we're doing on our own: This is really something that we're doing through partnerships," Albanese said. "They're the experts on homelessness in their communities."

Still, the number of veterans living on the streets is significant. There are more than 33,000 homeless veterans, according to the 2022 Point-in-Time count conducted by the VA and Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

And much still needs to be done, said Kathryn Monet, CEO of the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, calling it a "moving target" — just as people are moving out of homelessness, others become unhoused every day. Affordable housing is key, she said, though communities nationwide have struggled with that.

Along with housing, the VEO offers classes about financial literacy, securing VA benefits and how to get on a path toward employment and housing independence. There's also a common area for reading and a gym for working out.

"We are proud to say that we are not a shelter. This is a program center, meaning the veteran has to put some skin in the game," said Tony Kimbrough, a former military intelligence officer and CEO of the nonprofit, which started in 2008 with a single two-bedroom house. "We're going to put a ton of it in there, but we expect a little bit of back-and-forth."

Tilson became homeless in February when he was forced out of the triplex he was renting south of Atlanta.

Nation

Biden says America's veterans are 'the steel spine of this nation'

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Joe Biden said America's veterans are "the steel spine of this nation" as he marked Veterans Day during a visit to Arlington National Cemetery.

In remarks at the Memorial Amphitheater, the commander in chief recounted famous battles fought by U.S. troops and said those deployments of soldiers are "linked in a chain of honor that stretches back to our founding days. Each one bound by a sacred oath to support and defend. Not a place, not a person, not a president, but an idea, to defend an idea unlike any other in human history. That idea is the United States of America."

Nov. 11, once known as Armistice Day, is the anniversary of the armistice that ended World War I in 1918. Biden said that was "unlike any war the world had ever seen before."

AP

President Joe Biden speaks at the National Veterans Day Observance at the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Va., Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023.

The ceremony was personal for Biden and first lady Jill Biden.

Biden's son Beau enlisted in 2003 in the Delaware Army National Guard and deployed to Iraq in 2008 for a year as a member of the 261st Theater Tactical Signal Brigade. A captain, he earned the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star. Beau Biden later served two terms as the state's attorney general. He died in 2015 of brain cancer.

"We miss him," the president told the crowd, recounting how he pinned the bars on his son on the day he joined the National Guard.

"We come together today to once again honor the generations of Americans who stood on the front lines of freedom. To once again bear witness to the great deeds of a noble few who risked everything, everything, to give us a better future," he said, paying tribute to "those who have always, always kept the light of shining bright across the world."

Biden said that as commander in chief, "I have no higher honor. As the father of a son who served, I have no greater privilege."

He said that "our veterans are the steel spine of this nation and their families, like so many of you, are the courageous heart."

House Republicans look to pass two-step package to avoid partial gov't shutdown

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker Mike Johnson unveiled his proposal on Saturday to avoid a partial government shutdown by extending government funding for some agencies and programs until Jan. 19 and continuing funding for others until Feb. 2.

The approach is unusual for a stopgap spending bill. Usually, lawmakers extend funding until a certain date for all programs. Johnson decided to go with the combination approach, addressing concerns from GOP lawmakers seeking to avoid being presented with a massive spending bill just before the holidays.

"This two-step continuing resolution is a necessary bill to place House Republicans in the best position to fight for conservative victories," Johnson said in a statement after speaking with GOP lawmakers in an afternoon conference call. "The bill will stop the absurd holiday-season omnibus tradition of massive, loaded up spending bills introduced right before the Christmas recess."

The bill excludes funding requested by President Joe Biden for Israel, Ukraine and the U.S. border with Mexico. Johnson said separating Biden's request for an emergency supplemental bill from the temporary, stopgap measure "places our conference in the best position to fight for fiscal responsibility, oversight over Ukraine aid, and meaningful policy changes at our Southern border."

Hardline conservatives, usually loathe to support temporary spending measures of any sort, had indicated they would give Johnson some leeway to pass legislation, known as a continuing resolution, or CR, to give Congress more time to negotiate a long-term agreement.

But some were critical in their reactions following the conference call.

"My opposition to the clean CR just announced by the Speaker to the @HouseGOP cannot be overstated," Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, tweeted on X. "Funding Pelosi level spending & policies for 75 days - for future 'promises.'"

The White House, meanwhile, panned the plan as "unserious," unworkable and a threat to national security and domestic programs.

"This proposal is just a recipe for more Republican chaos and more shutdowns—full stop," said press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, pointing to opposition from members of both parties. "House Republicans need to stop wasting time on their own political divisions, do their jobs, and work in a bipartisan way to prevent a shutdown."

The federal government is operating under funding levels approved last year by a Democratic-led House and Senate. Facing a government shutdown when the fiscal year ended Sept. 30, Congress passed a 47-day continuing resolution, but the fallout was severe. Kevin McCarthy was booted from the speakership days later, and the House was effectively paralyzed for most of the month while Republicans tried to elect a replacement.

Republicans eventually were unanimous in electing Johnson speaker, but his elevation has hardly eased the dynamic that led to McCarthy's removal—a conference torn on policy as well as how much to spend on federal programs. This past week, Republicans had to pull two spending bills from the floor—one to fund transportation and housing programs and the other to fund the Treasury Department, Small Business Administration and other agencies—because they didn't have the votes in their own party to push them through the House.

A document explaining Johnson's proposal to House Republicans, obtained by The Associated Press, said funding for four spending bills would be extended until Jan. 19. Veterans programs, and bills dealing with transportation, housing, agriculture and energy, would be part of that extension.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police arrest LA man in connection with dismembered body, missing wife, in-laws

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Police have arrested a Los Angeles man in connection with the discovery of the torso of a dismembered female body and the disappearance of his wife and her live-in parents. The Los Angeles Police Department confirmed Saturday the arrest of 35-year-old Samuel Haskell. He has been jailed on suspicion of murder while police attempt to identify the torso, which was found within a bag in a dumpster on Wednesday. The arrest was supported by evidence from a search of Haskell's home in the Tarzana area where he lived with his wife, in-laws and three children, police said. Haskell's 37-year-old wife, Mei Li Haskell, has gone missing along with her parents. The children have been located and are being cared for by relatives, police said. Police did not know if Haskell had an attorney who could speak on his behalf, and there were no court files immediately available online to indicate if he had hired an attorney or been assigned a public defender. Family members could not immediately be reached. Haskell was being held in lieu of $2 million bail, with a court appearance scheduled for Monday. Multiple media outlets have identified Haskell as the son and namesake of a former executive at a prominent Hollywood talent agency. Police identified Mei Li Haskell's parents as Gaoshan Li, 71, and Yanxiang Wang, 64.

Texas police officer, suspect killed in a shooting; two other people were found dead

A Texas police officer was killed early Saturday in a shooting that left the shooter dead and a second officer wounded, authorities said. Two other people were later found dead inside a home in Austin, according to interim Police Chief Robin Henderson. An emotional Henderson, who paused often during a news conference and appeared to be choking back tears, said officers were called to the home shortly before 3 a.m. Saturday by a woman screaming that she was being stabbed. One person escaped the home before officers arrived, Henderson said, and told police the man in the home was armed with a knife. Police then tried to enter the home and were met with gunfire, but did not return fire, retreated and called for a SWAT team, said Henderson, who did not take questions and was surrounded by about 10 other officers during her comments. "SWAT officers arrived on scene and forced entry into the residence ... to rescue the victims," Henderson said. "As SWAT officers entered the suspect immediately fired his gun at the officers and the SWAT officers returned fire." ***(AP)***

Pennsylvania man arrested in fire that killed more than two dozen horses at NY racetrack

NICHOLS, N.Y. (AP)—Authorities are investigating the deaths of more than two dozen racehorses in a barn fire at an upstate New York track that they believe was deliberately set. The horses were killed early Thursday after the barn where they were housed at the Tioga Downs Casino Resort complex was set on fire, the state police said in a news release. The track and casino are in Nichols, a town of about 2,500 people near the border with Pennsylvania and roughly 150 miles (200 kilometers) northwest of New York City. A 32-year-old Athens, Pennsylvania, man was charged with arson, burglary and other counts. According to the state police, an investigation revealed that an individual entered the barn and intentionally set a fire, causing thousands of dollars in damage. The agency didn't disclose a possible motive. Someone who entered the burning barn to try to save horses suffered second-degree burns and was taken to Robert Packer Hospital for treatment, police said. That person's name was not released. "We are deeply saddened by today's tragedy, it was a loss no one could have imagined or expected," said Jeff Gural, chairman of American Racing and Entertainment LLC, which operates the Tioga Downs Casino Resort complex. "It is an active investigation, so we are not able to comment any further at this time."

Asia

PH joins Japan-led naval drills

AP

U.S. Navy's F-35C stealth fighter jet and crew prepare for a takeoff for a flight demonstration during the Annualex 23 joint naval exercise, from aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson* off the Japanese coast, Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023.

ABOARD THE USS CARL VINSON (AP)—Japan led an annual multinational naval exercise that included the Philippines as an observer for the first time, as Filipino coast guard vessels are increasingly harassed by China in the disputed South China Sea.

» As brushes with China rise in disputed South China Sea

The Annualex exercises that began Saturday off Japan's coast also included the United States, Australia and Canada. Their aim is to demonstrate and increase ways the navies can work together, and show their presence and commitment to defend a "free and open" Indo-Pacific, which the allies say is hampered by China's growing ambitions that include sweeping territorial claims.

On Saturday, a selected group of journalists, including The Associated Press, flew on an V-22 Osprey aircraft to the USS *Carl Vinson* aircraft carrier to observe takeoffs and landings of F-35C "Lightning" stealth fighters, as well as F/A-18 Super Hornet jets and E/A-18 Growlers. The Japanese destroyer Hyuga showed its presence next to the carrier.

■ ■ ■

ABOARD THE BRP CABRA (AP)—As a U.S. Navy surveillance plane flew in circles, keeping a close watch, dozens of Chinese coast guard and accompanying ships chased and encircled Philippine vessels in the latest confrontation in one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the South China Sea.

At the height of Friday's four-hour faceoff in the high seas, a Chinese coast guard ship blasted a water cannon toward a Philippine motorboat delivering food and other supplies to Filipino forces on a marooned, rusting warship that serves as the country's fragile territorial outpost at Second Thomas Shoal.

China has steadfastly stood by its claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway, clashing with its smaller neighbors and drawing in the United States, Manila's treaty ally and China's main rival in the Asia-Pacific region. Washington and its allies have deployed navy ships and fighter aircraft to promote freedom of navigation and overflight, build up deterrence and reassure allies like the Philippines.

There are fears that the recurring confrontations at Second Thomas Shoal, which lies within the U.N.-sanctioned Philippine exclusive economic zone but is claimed by China and surrounded by its flotilla, could ignite an armed conflict pitting the U.S. against China. Philippine officials said Saturday they would never take any step that could ignite a larger conflict but would not be deterred in defending the country's sovereign rights in the South China Sea.

US, India reaffirm security ties as top diplomats, defense officials hold talks

NEW DELHI (AP)—India and the U.S. underlined their commitment to boosting security ties Friday as their top diplomats and defense chiefs met to discuss regional security, China and the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin met with their Indian counterparts in New Delhi as part of an Asian trip aimed at showing unity over Russia's war in Ukraine and preventing differences on the Israel-Hamas war from deepening.

Blinken said the U.S. and India were continuing to "deepen our collaboration on everything from emerging technologies to defense to people-to-people ties" and align diplomacy for "an Indo-Pacific region that's free, that's open, that's prosperous, that's resilient."

He said the two sides discussed the crisis in the Middle East and "we appreciate the fact that from day one India has strongly condemned the attacks of Oct. 7. And as our joint statement makes clear, India and the United States stand with Israel against terrorists."

Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said the situation in the Middle East was a big concern. While India has condemned the Hamas attack on Israel, it balances its position by calling for talks on "a sovereign, independent and viable state of Palestine living within secure and recognized borders, side-by-side at peace with Israel."

Blinken met with India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and "reaffirmed their shared vision for close partnership in the Indo-Pacific," said U.S. State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller.

"They emphasized working together to address ongoing crises such as Russia's war against Ukraine and the conflict in the Middle East," Miller said.

Vinay Mohan Kwatra, India's top bureaucrat in the foreign ministry, said India's tense ties with China also were discussed at the official-level talks, but declined to give details.

India's relationship with China has deteriorated since 2020, when Indian and Chinese troops clashed along their disputed border in the Himalayan Ladakh region, leaving 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers dead. A standoff involving thousands of soldiers in the eastern Ladakh region continues, despite several rounds of military and diplomatic talks.

World

Netanyahu rejects growing calls for cease-fire in Gaza

» As Israel battles Hamas outside main Gaza hospital

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP)—Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pushed back Saturday against growing international calls for a cease-fire, saying Israel's battle to crush Gaza's ruling Hamas militants will continue with "full force."

A cease-fire would be possible only if all 239 hostages held by militants in Gaza are released, Netanyahu said in a televised address.

The Israeli leader also insisted that after the war, now entering its sixth week, Gaza would be demilitarized and Israel would retain security control there. Asked what he meant by security control, Netanyahu said Israeli forces must be able to enter Gaza freely to hunt down militants.

He also rejected the idea that the Palestinian Authority, which currently administers autonomous areas in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, would at some stage control Gaza. Both positions run counter to post-war scenarios floated by Israel's closest ally, the United States. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the U.S. opposes an Israeli reoccupation of Gaza and envisions a unified Palestinian government in both Gaza and the West Bank at some stage as a step toward Palestinian statehood.

For now, Netanyahu said, "the war against (Hamas) is advancing with full force, and it has one goal, to win. There is no alternative to victory."

Pressure was growing on Israel after frantic doctors at Gaza's largest hospital said the last generator had run out of fuel, causing the death of a premature baby, another child in an incubator and four other patients. Thousands of war-wounded, medical staff and displaced civilians were caught in the fighting.

In recent days, fighting near Shifa and other hospitals in northern Gaza has intensified and supplies have run out. The Israeli military has alleged, without providing evidence, that Hamas has established command posts in and underneath hospitals, using civilians as human shields. Medical staff at Shifa have denied such claims and accused Israel of harming civilians with indiscriminate attacks.

Shifa hospital director Mohammed Abu Selmia said the facility lost power Saturday.

"Medical devices stopped. Patients, especially those in intensive care, started to die," he said by phone, with gunfire and explosions in the background. He said Israeli troops were "shooting at anyone outside or inside the hospital" and prevented movement between buildings.

The World Health Organization later said it lost communication with its contacts at Shifa, according to a post on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Israel's military confirmed clashes outside the hospital, but Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari denied Shifa was under siege. He said troops will assist Sunday in moving babies treated there and said "we are speaking directly and regularly" with hospital staff.

Amos Yadlin, a former head of Israeli military intelligence, told broadcaster Channel 12 that as Israel aims to crush Hamas, taking control of the hospitals would be key but require "a lot of tactical creativity," without hurting patients, other civilians and Israeli hostages.

Six patients died at Shifa after the generator shut down, including the two children, spokesmen with the Hamas-run Health Ministry said.

More than 800 Sudanese are reportedly killed in attack on Darfur town, UN says

CAIRO (AP)—Fighters from a paramilitary force and their allied Arab militias rampaged through a town in Sudan's war-ravaged region of Darfur, reportedly killing more than 800 people in a multiday attack, doctors and the U.N. said.

The attack on Ardamata in West Darfur province earlier this month was the latest in a series of atrocities in Darfur that marked the monthslong war between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, RSF.

Sudan has been engulfed in chaos since in mid-April, when simmering tensions between military chief Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan and the commander of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, Gen. Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, exploded into open warfare.

The war came 18 months after both generals removed a transitional government in a military coup. The military takeover ended Sudan's short-lived fragile transition to democracy following a popular uprising that forced the overthrow of longtime strongman Omar al-Bashir in April 2019.

In recent weeks the RSF advanced in Darfur, taking over entire cities and towns across the sprawling region, despite the warring parties' return to the negotiating table in Saudi Arabia late last month. The first round of talks, brokered by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, failed to establish a cease-fire.

The dayslong attack in Ardamata came after the RSF took over a military base in the town after a brief fighting on Nov. 4 with troops there, said Salah Tour, head of the Sudanese Doctor's Union in West Darfur. He said the military withdrew from the base, adding that around two dozen wounded troops fled to Chad.

Spokespeople for the military and the RSF didn't respond to phone calls seeking comment.

After seizing the military base, the RSF and their allied Arab militias rampaged through the town, killing non-Arabs inside their homes and torching shelters housing displaced people, Tour said.

"They violently attacked the town," he said, adding that the RSF and their militias targeted the African Masalit tribe. "They went from house to house, killing and detaining people."

The Darfur Bar Association, an advocacy group, accused RSF fighters of committing "all types of serious violations against defenseless civilians" in Ardamata. It cited an attack on Nov. 6 during which the RSF killed more than 50 people including a tribal leader and his family.

The UNHCR said more than 800 people have been reportedly killed and 8,000 others fled to neighboring Chad. The agency, however, said the number of people who fled was likely to be an underestimate due to challenges registering new arrivals to Chad.

Health & Wellness

Living with COPD

By LAUREL KELLY
Mayo Clinic News Network

November is National COPD Awareness Month, which makes this a good time to learn more about living with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD.

COPD is a leading cause of disability and death in the U.S., according to the American Lung Association. More than 12.5 million people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with COPD, but millions more may have the disease without knowing it.

COPD is a chronic inflammatory lung disease caused by long-term exposure to irritating gases or particulate matter, most often from cigarette smoke. People with COPD are at increased risk of developing respiratory infections, heart disease, lung cancer, pulmonary hypertension and depression. Also, if you have a chronic lung disease such as COPD, you may be at greater risk of severe illness and complications from COVID-19.

Factors that can increase your risk of COPD include exposure to tobacco smoke, including secondhand smoke; asthma; occupational exposure to dust and chemicals; exposure to fumes from burning fuel; and genetics.

DREAMSTIME

Symptoms

Symptoms of COPD often don't appear until significant lung damage has occurred, and they usually worsen over time, particularly if cigarette smoke exposure continues.

Signs and symptoms of COPD can include:

- Shortness of breath.
- Wheezing.
- Chest tightness.
- Chronic cough that may produce clear, white, yellow or green mucus.
- Frequent respiratory infections.
- Lack of energy.
- Unintended weight loss.
- Swelling in the ankles, feet or legs.

Treatment

If you've been diagnosed with COPD and you smoke, it is important that you quit. Most cases of COPD in the U.S. are directedly related to long-term cigarette smoking. Stopping smoking can prevent COPD from worsening and reducing your ability to breathe.

Many people with COPD have mild forms of the disease for which little therapy is needed other than quitting smoking. Even for more advanced stages of the disease, effective therapy is available that can control symptoms, slow progression, reduce your risk of complications and exacerbations, and improve your ability to lead an active life.

Treatment for COPD can include medications, lung therapies, in-home noninvasive ventilation therapy, managing exacerbations and surgery.

Coping

Living with COPD can be a challenge—especially as it becomes harder to catch your breath. You may have to give up some activities you previously enjoyed. Your family and friends may have difficulty adjusting to some of the changes.

It can help to share your fears and feelings with your family, friends and healthcare team. You also may want to consider joining a support group for people with COPD, and you may benefit from counseling or medication if you feel depressed or overwhelmed.

If you have COPD, these strategies can help you feel better and slow the damage to your lungs:

- Control your breathing. Talk to your primary health care professional or respiratory therapist about techniques for breathing more efficiently throughout the day. Also be sure to discuss breathing positions, energy conservation techniques and relaxation techniques that you can use when you're short of breath.
- Clear your airways. With COPD, mucus tends to collect in your air passages and can be difficult to clear. Controlled coughing, drinking plenty of water and using a humidifier may help.
- Exercise regularly. It may seem difficult to exercise when you have trouble breathing, but regular exercise can improve your overall strength and endurance and strengthen your respiratory muscles. Discuss with your healthcare team which activities are appropriate for you.
- Eat healthy foods. A healthy diet can help you maintain your strength. If you're underweight, your healthcare professional may recommend nutritional supplements. If you're overweight, losing weight can significantly help your breathing, especially during times of exertion.
- Avoid smoke and air pollution. Besides quitting smoking, avoiding places where others smoke is important. Secondhand smoke may contribute to further lung damage. Other types of air pollution also can irritate your lungs, so check daily air quality forecasts before going out.
- See your health care team regularly. Stick to your appointment schedule, even if you're feeling fine. It's important to regularly monitor your lung function and let your healthcare team know if you have worsening symptoms or notice signs of infection. Be sure to get your annual flu vaccine in the fall to help prevent infections that can worsen your COPD and ask your healthcare team when you need the pneumococcal vaccine.

Atopic dermatitis triggers and treatment

By DEB BALZER
Mayo Clinic News Network

Atopic dermatitis, the most common form of eczema, is a widespread skin condition known for causing dry, itchy and inflamed skin. It affects 15% to 20% of children and 8% to 10% of adults. The discomfort it brings can disrupt a person's everyday life if not treated.

Dr. Dawn Davis, a dermatologist at Mayo Clinic and co-chair of the American Academy of Dermatology Atopic Dermatitis Guidelines Committee, is an author of the newly released and updated guidelines for managing atopic dermatitis.

She says understanding potential triggers for atopic dermatitis is a start.

Triggers for atopic dermatitis or eczema can be internal and external.

"Any sort of stressor to the mind, to the nerves, to the skin or to the immune system can cause a flare of eczema," says Dr. Davis.

It could be daily stress, a food allergy or the jewelry you are wearing.

"Some people with eczema are sensitive to nickel, they may be sensitive to a preservative and a medication that they're using," she says.

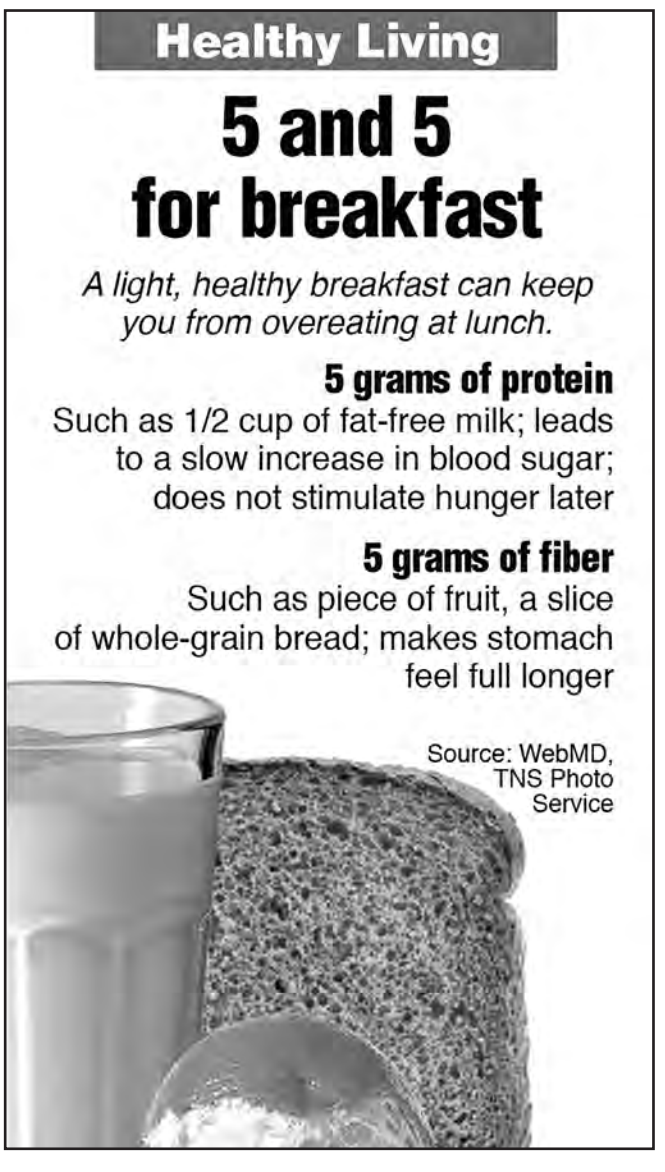
Learning how to decrease your sensitivity or stress can help.

Dr. Davis encourages patients to:

- Practice mind-body exercises.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Stay hydrated.
- Avoid smoking.
- Practice a sensitive skincare routine.

This includes daily baths or showers with mild soaps, and frequent moisturizing with a fragrance-free, dye-free and chemical-free lotion.

"They may need may need prescription medicines. Those can be available topically by a cream or an ointment or systemically by a pill or a shot. And then we may choose to do advanced therapy beyond that, such as patch testing," Dr. Davis says.


Healthy Living
5 and 5 for breakfast
A light, healthy breakfast can keep you from overeating at lunch.
5 grams of protein
Such as 1/2 cup of fat-free milk; leads to a slow increase in blood sugar; does not stimulate hunger later
5 grams of fiber
Such as piece of fruit, a slice of whole-grain bread; makes stomach feel full longer
Source: WebMD, TNS Photo Service

Stacking your exercise over the weekend

By ALEX OSIADACZ
Mayo Clinic News Network

Researchers have found that condensing exercise into a few days is as effective as spreading activity out across a week. Dr. Wes Troyer, a Mayo Clinic physical medicine and rehabilitation physician, explains how people who stack their workouts can avoid common injuries and reap the benefits of their activity.

Exercise is key to a healthy lifestyle.

For those on a time crunch, stacking weekly exercise into a couple of days comes with the title "weekend warrior."

"Things like running, jogging, high-intensity workouts, ideally, the more that you can do, the better. People that did this, lowered mortality, lowered cardiovascular events," says Dr. Troyer.

At least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous activity is recommended for adults each week.

"We don't expect people that have gone from a sedentary activity of not doing anything to jumping into 150 minutes a week. So taking days of break in between, assessing how your body responds to that activity," says Dr. Troyer.

Repeating the same motions or ramping up too quickly could lead to overuse injuries, inflammation and pain.

"If you take a couple days off and it's still persistent pain with daily activity—pain that keeps you up at night or keeps you from sleeping—these are all things that we typically recommend people coming in to be evaluated," he says.

MAYO CLINIC MINUTE

What to know about aging and joint replacements

By DEB BALZER
Mayo Clinic News Network

As people age, their joints change. Sometimes, this can lead to arthritis, causing pain in areas like the knees and hips. Dr. Rafael Sierra, a Mayo Clinic orthopedic surgeon, says arthritis and joint replacements are not inevitable. However, conditions like birth defects and structural issues can increase the risk of hip or knee problems that may result in the need for replacement.

Dr. Sierra wants to set the record straight about aging and joint replacements.

"The perception out there is that everybody's going to need a hip replacement down the road, whether it's knee or hip, everybody's going to need some form of replacement. That's not necessarily true," he says.

He says it's not aging but anatomy that will predispose people to knee or hip replacements down the road.

"This is a perfect example. This a patient that had a slip when they were very young. See, there's an abnormal shape to the femur. And this abnormal shape will cause damage of this affected bone into the socket that would lead to hip arthritis," says Dr. Sierra.

Joint replacements today are more successful than ever—thanks to precision robotic surgery.

"And today, with navigation systems, robotic systems, precision is what is now achievable in almost every patient," Dr. Sierra says.

Life & Style

SZA leads the 2024 Grammy nominations as women outpace men

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Killing her ex? That's a bad idea. Writing "Kill Bill" and releasing her critically acclaimed sophomore album "SOS" earlier this year? That was a great one. SZA is the lead contender for the 66th Grammy Awards, with nine nominations announced Friday.

"Kill Bill," her revenge anthem cloaked in an R&B ballad, earned her nods for record of the year, song of the year, and best R&B performance. "SOS" is also up for album of the year and best progressive R&B album. The 2024 ceremony will mark the second time SZA has been nominated for record, album, and song of the year in the same year.

And just like at the box office, "Barbie" will be seen—and heard—at the Grammys. Music from the hit film's soundtrack earned 11 nominations, including nabbing four of the five slots in the visual media song category.

If there is an overall trend in the 2024 nominations, it's that female acts outperformed their male counterparts. The majority of leading nominees are women and include superstars like Taylor Swift, Billie Eilish, Miley Cyrus and Olivia Rodrigo. In both the record and album of the year categories, the only man represented is Jon Batiste.

AP

SZA, winner of the award for best pop duo/group performance for "Kiss Me More," poses in the press room at the 64th Annual Grammy Awards on April 3, 2022, in Las Vegas.

"Seeing the women nominees this year, and the number of them, was not a surprise but it was something that made me happy," the Recording Academy CEO and President Harvey Mason jr. told The Associated Press. He believes that representation allows the next group of creators to look at the nominees and say: "Maybe somebody will love what I do one day, or maybe I have an opportunity to express myself or voice my thoughts like that person."

SZA, of course, leads the charge, also picking up nominations for best traditional R&B performance ("Love Language"), best R&B song ("Snooze"), best melodic rap performance ("Low"), and best pop duo/group performance ("Ghost in the Machine"). The last features Phoebe Bridgers, who—alongside Victoria Monét, the only leading nominee also up for best new artist—boasts the second-most nominations with seven.

Six of Bridgers' nods are with her band boygenius, nominated for the first time for record of the year, album of the year, best rock performance, best rock song, best alternative music performance, and best alternative music album.

Also earning six nominations: Swift, Rodrigo, Cyrus, Eilish, Brandy Clark, Batiste and producer Jack Antonoff.

Only recordings released between Oct. 1, 2022, through Sept. 15, 2023 were eligible.

In addition to Monét, the best new artist category is rounded out by Gracie Abrams, Fred again.., Ice Spice, Jelly Roll, Coco Jones, Noah Kahan and The War and Treaty.

For album of the year, it's again Batiste, boygenius, Cyrus, Rodrigo, Swift, and SZA, but with the addition of Lana Del Rey's "Did you know that there's a tunnel under Ocean Blvd" and Janelle Monáe's "The Age of Pleasure."

The song of the year category features Del Rey's "A&W," Swift's "Anti-Hero," Batiste's "Butterfly," Cyrus' "Flowers," SZA's "Kill Bill," Rodrigo's "vampire," and two tracks from the "Barbie" soundtrack: Dua Lipa's "Dance The Night" and Eilish's "What Was I Made For?"

While "I'm Just Ken" from "Barbie" did get a nomination, it's in a songwriting category—so actor Ryan Gosling is not up for a Grammy.

Hollywood actors union ends strike

Board members from Hollywood's actors union voted Friday to approve the deal with studios that ended their strike after nearly four months, with the union's leadership touting the gains made in weeks of methodical negotiations.

Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists' executive director and chief negotiator, announced at an afternoon news conference that the tentative agreement was approved with 86% of the vote.

The three-year contract agreement next goes to a vote from the union's members, who are now learning what they earned through spending the summer and early fall on picket lines instead of film and television sets. That vote begins Tuesday and continues into December.

Crabtree-Ireland said the deal "will keep the motion picture industry sustainable as a profession for working class performers."

SAG-AFTRA President Fran Drescher said the studios believed they could outlast actors by waiting more than two months before initiating talks.

"What were they doing? Were they trying to smoke us out?" she said. "Well honey, I quit smoking a long time ago."

Crabtree-Ireland and Drescher would not give specifics on who disapproved of the deal, and why. The board vote was weighted, so it's not immediately clear how many people voted against approval.

Overall, the happy scene at SAG-AFTRA's Los Angeles headquarters was as different as can be from the defiant, angry tone of a news conference in the same room in July, when guild leaders announced that actors would join writers in a historic strike that shook the industry. ***(AP)***

Political spat over restaurant was bad manners

DEAR ABBY: My father-in-law and I are just cut from different cloth. We are political opposites, although we do get along for the most part. On a family vacation (we were visiting them), we were going out for dinner. My wife and I knew he was going to take us to a restaurant we both have ethical issues with. I handed him a 10% off coupon for a different nearby restaurant and said, "Here's another option for dinner." When he responded that he thought we'd go to the first place, I said, "Sorry. I have some moral issues with it and won't eat there. Is there somewhere else we can go?" He then blew up at me, saying things like, "If you're not paying, what difference does it make?" and "Since you're our guest, it's rude of you to refuse." My wife agreed that he was out of line. What do you think? Was it rude of us as their guests? Or rude of him as a host to not accommodate us?

NOT GOING THERE IN NEBRASKA

DEAR NOT GOING: You have a loyal and loving wife. However, a more honest and less biased spouse would have pointed out (privately) that your manners were atrocious. A gracious guest accepts the hospitality offered by their host rather than trying to turn the occasion into a demonstration of cancel culture. You owe your father-in-law an apology.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I are retired and are both managing separate cancer diagnoses. This makes our finances hard to predict in the event one of us needs expensive medication. We did a good job saving for retirement and live comfortably.

Our adult daughter contracted Lyme disease 10 years ago and became very ill. She endured years of painful treatments—which were not covered by insurance—during which time her husband divorced her. We stepped in to help with her medical bills. While the Lyme is no longer detectable in her system, some of the symptoms have never completely gone away. Now she's undergoing more tests looking at a hormone imbalance.

My husband is angry that we are still paying some of her medical bills. (She works, has insurance and pays for what she can.) We can afford to help her, and I don't understand why her father doesn't want to help her anymore. We've argued about this many times over the years, and I'm frustrated with the situation. I'm not willing to give up on her like so many others have. What can I say to him the next time he confronts me about paying her medical bills?

DEVOTED IN OREGON

DEAR DEVOTED: It may be time to stop arguing with your husband about this. Your adult daughter works and has medical insurance. You and your husband are both medically fragile. While I understand your desire to protect your daughter, you should not be supplementing her income if it threatens your access to the medications you may need in the future.

■■■

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

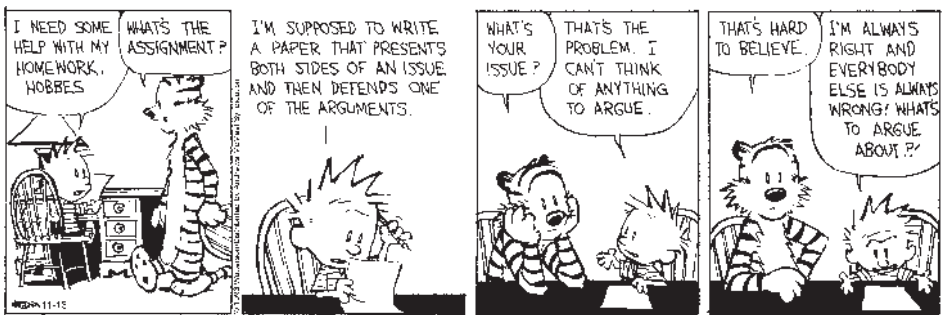
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

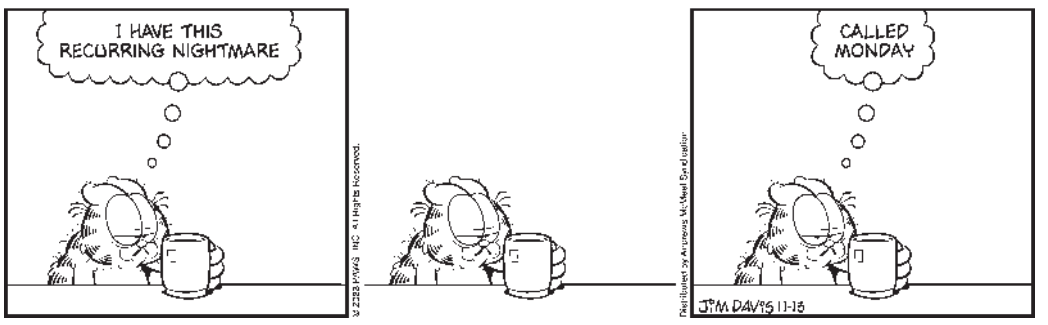
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I NEED SOME HELP WITH MY HOMEWORK, HOBBES.
WHAT'S THE ASSIGNMENT?
I'M SUPPOSED TO WRITE A PAPER THAT PRESENTS BOTH SIDES OF AN ISSUE AND THEN DEFENDS ONE OF THE ARGUMENTS.
WHAT'S YOUR ISSUE?
THAT'S THE PROBLEM. I CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING TO ARGUE.
THAT'S HARD TO BELIEVE.
I'M ALWAYS RIGHT AND EVERYBODY ELSE IS ALWAYS WRONG! WHAT'S TO ARGUE ABOUT?!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



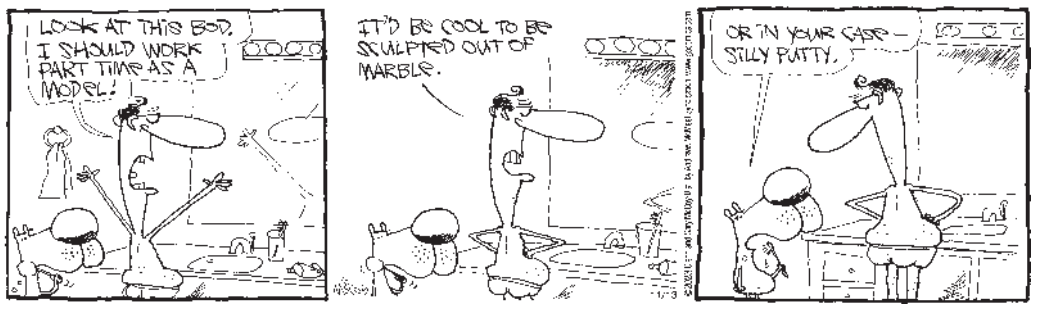
Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset

ADAM! HOW'S IT GOING?
MEH. NOT GREAT, REALLY.
MY FREELANCE WORK HAS SLOWED WAY DOWN. MY BOOKS AREN'T SELLING.
IT'S BEEN KIND OF ROUGH.
SO, EXTRA-LARGE COFFEE AND THREE CINNAMON ROLLS?
YEP. THE MOPEY SPECIAL.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Gratuity
4 College VIPs
9 Bliss
12 Docs' org.
13 Rolling Stones hit song
14 Common verb
15 Brit's approval
17 Verily
18 Yale grad
19 Maine city
21 Sign up anew
24 New Age singer
25 Outer (Pref.)
26 Hamilton bill
28 Brawl
31 Unoriginal one
33 Salty expanse
35 Russian ruler
36 Access the Web
38 Den sets
40 Iota
41 Bar
43 Gas components
45 Austria's capital
47 TV's "Science Guy"
48 Citric beverage
49 Playground fixture
54 Signing need
55 Farewell
56 Fish eggs
57 Jargon suffix
58 Transmits
59 Skedaddle

DOWN
1 Mahal preceder
2 "As I see it," to a texter
3 Chum
4 Naturally illuminated
5 Web search tools
6 Past
7 Weeper of myth
8 Family cars
9 Protagonist in a Fitzgerald novel
10 Nabisco cookie
11 Once around the sun
16 Zodiac cat
20 Russian denial
21 Genuine
22 Big fair, for short
23 Football's "mean" Hall-of-Famer
27 Profit
29 Follow
30 Scraps
32 Reddish horse
34 Got back at
37 Japanese warriors
39 Phonograph needle
42 Summa cum —
44 Haw preceder
45 Smoke an e-cig
46 Mid-month date
50 French diarist Anais
51 Rover's warning
52 Thee
53 Chess pieces

Solution time: 21 mins.

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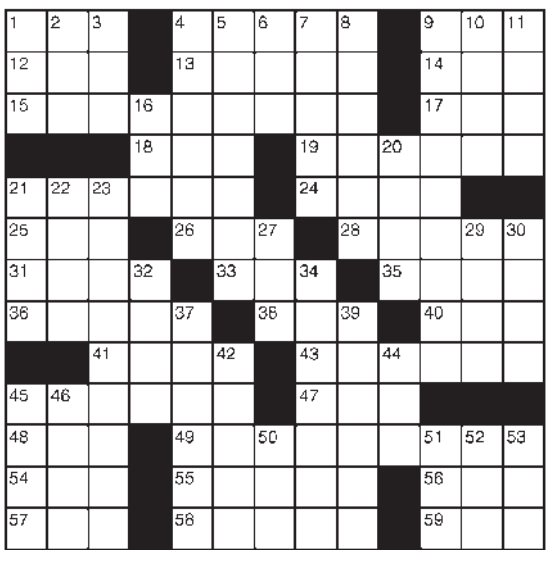
Last Friday's Answer



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Gerard Butler, 54; Jimmy Kimmel, 56; Steve Zahn, 56; Whoopi Goldberg, 68.

Happy Birthday: Make up your mind, embrace change and prepare to take advantage of whatever opportunity comes your way. Think about the possibilities, and don't be afraid to do things differently. Trust in your capability and let your imagination take over. Stop dreaming and start doing, and you'll gain respect and the support that will pave the way for future endeavors. Your numbers are 9, 16, 22, 28, 30, 36, 42.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Put your head down and do what others expect of you. Completion is essential if you want others to take you seriously. Don't let spontaneity lead to unnecessary purchases. Be tightfisted and pay down any debt you've accumulated. Be wary of joint ventures. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Don't waste time. There's plenty you can do to get ahead if you move into high gear and pursue your dreams. Stop talking and start doing, and you'll be pleased with the results and the response you receive. Your determination will boost your reputation. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Do what makes you happy. Designating time for self-improvement projects will help you realize what's important to you. A heart-to-heart talk with someone close to you will be informative and prompt you to reinforce your skills. Nurture a meaningful relationship and avoid a setback. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* A change of pace will offer insight into cutting corners and making day-to-day life manageable. You can turn one of your skills into extra income if you use your imagination to redefine how you present and promote what you offer. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Take the initiative to reach out and have conversations that offer insight into something you want to pursue. Networking functions will be informative regarding updates that can help you hone your skills to suit trends. Change what's necessary to avoid backlash. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Get your facts straight before you converse with someone well-versed regarding the topic you want to address. Knowledge is vital if you wish to bring about positive change. You can make a difference if you are specific and show enthusiasm. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Don't hold back. Say what's on your mind and follow through. A change at home that helps you save money will ease stress. Take the initiative and show discipline, and you'll have an impact on others. Don't put off what you can do today. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Consider your options, be creative and introduce positive change that makes your home comfortable and meaningful relationships loving. Communication will help settle your differences with those you live and work alongside. Showing flexibility will lead to an unexpected opportunity. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Take care of your responsibilities with a smile, not a complaint, and you'll dodge a sticky situation that can stand between you and one of your pursuits. Use your charm and imagination to find an amicable way to get what you want. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Consider how you use your skills and how to adapt what you can do to suit what's trending. Making yourself and what you have to offer more versatile will improve your opportunity to try something new and exciting. See what happens. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Take more time to prepare. You'll meet with criticism and opposition if you implement changes that have flaws. Stick to your budget and work out any problems before sharing. Arguments will slow you down; remain positive, do your best and finish what you start. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* You can make extra cash and take advantage of opportunities if you invest time and money in yourself and what you offer. Focus on looking and feeling your best and spending time with someone who brings out the best in you. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are spontaneous, sensitive and bold. You are persistent and distinguished.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

2		5		1	4			6
6	3	7				4		
1			3	7			5	
	5	4	8		9		2	
9	2			3		6	4	7
	1	6	4		7			8
8						3	6	
5	7	1		9				
4					8			

Difficulty: ★ 11/13

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's Answer

8	7	4	2	9	3	1	6	5
6	5	2	7	8	1	4	3	9
9	3	1	5	6	4	7	2	8
5	6	3	9	2	7	8	1	4
4	1	7	8	3	6	5	9	2
2	9	8	1	4	5	3	7	6
3	8	5	6	7	2	9	4	1
7	2	9	4	1	8	6	5	3
1	4	6	3	5	9	2	8	7

Difficulty: ★★★★ 11/11

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

CANCELING A RESERVATION IS IMPORTANT Sol.: 4 letters

C	O	M	M	I	T	M	E	N	T	H	G	I	L	F
A	H	E	T	N	O	I	T	P	E	C	E	R	T	I
L	C	A	L	E	N	D	A	R	F	I	T	E	S	T
L	I	C	R	U	M	R	O	F	Y	A	X	N	I	N
N	M	A	E	G	R	M	A	R	B	T	E	N	L	E
O	O	R	M	S	E	T	A	L	N	N	D	I	T	S
I	H	N	I	E	S	R	E	E	O	A	I	D	I	S
T	G	O	L	F	B	U	M	H	E	L	C	O	A	R
A	N	E	T	I	N	T	P	T	M	P	E	C	W	E
C	I	C	L	E	N	O	S	A	C	O	D	T	R	M
I	K	I	V	I	L	E	C	I	Y	A	O	O	E	O
L	R	R	O	I	S	P	I	R	T	M	T	R	D	T
P	A	P	C	O	N	S	U	L	T	N	E	N	R	S
P	P	Y	R	A	T	E	R	C	E	S	E	N	O	U
A	V	A	I	L	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y	D	T	C

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Access, Application, Appointment, Availability, Calendar, Call, Charge, Commitment, Confirm, Consult, Contact, Customer, Decide, Dentist, Dinner, Doctor, Email, Fitness, Flight, Form, Hotel, Library, Online, Order, Parking, Payment, Phone, Plan, Policy, Price, Reception, Room, Rule, Secretary, Staff, Table, Text, Trips, Venue, Waitlist

Last Friday's Answer: Black Belt

Purchase WONDERWORD books in time for the holidays!, visit www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-800-233-2367)

Adebayo scores 26 points as depleted Heat show off depth in win vs Hawks

AP
Miami Heat center Bam Adebayo (13) drives against Atlanta Hawks guard Wesley Matthews (32) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, in Atlanta.

ATLANTA (AP)—Bam Adebayo scored 26 points with 17 rebounds and rookie Jaime Jaquez Jr. added a career-high 20 points as the short-handed Miami Heat beat the Atlanta Hawks 117-109 on Saturday night for their fourth straight win.

Miami was playing its first game since leading scorer Tyler Herro sprained his right ankle in Wednesday night's 108-102 win at Memphis. Herro is expected to miss at least two weeks. Another top scorer, Jimmy Butler, missed the game against Atlanta for personal reasons.

Coach Erik Spoelstra said he was given a strong indication in a pregame meeting that players were eager to fill the void left by Herro and Butler when he informed the team "we were going to have to have some guys step up."

Added Spoelstra: "Everyone was leaning forward with the body language saying 'It's me.'"

The Heat showed off their depth to find scoring from different sources.

Kyle Lowry scored 17 points and Josh Richardson had 16, also a season high. Duncan Robinson scored 11 points in his first start of the season. Kevin Love had seven points.

Jaquez, making his third start, almost doubled his previous high of 11 points against Memphis.

"I wouldn't say necessarily to score," Jaquez said when asked how he saw his role in the new lineup. "I would say to just make plays."

The emergence of different scorers was not a surprise to Spoelstra, who said before the game he had "a lot of guys who have been chomping at the bit to get more minutes. ... Guys are prepared."

Trae Young led Atlanta with 27 points, including 14 in the fourth quarter, and 11 assists. Dejounte Murray had 23 points. Each guard attempted nine 3-pointers, but coach Quin Snyder wasn't satisfied with his team's 18 of 46 shooting on long-range shots.

"We had some good looks that we didn't take," Snyder said.

Added Young: "We've just got to shoot the ball. When we catch the ball, just shoot it. Don't hesitate."

Young said Miami's defense "will make you think you've got a driving lane and other guys are over there helping. If you're not ready to shoot 3s against this team, you're going to have a tough night."

Jaquez, the first-round pick from UCLA, hit a buzzer-beating 3-pointer to close the first half, giving Miami a 63-52 lead.

Miami led by 21 late in the first half. Atlanta's last lead was 5-4.

The Hawks were averaging 121.8 points per game, third in the league. It was the best average through eight games for the franchise since the St. Louis Hawks averaged 117.5 in the start of the 1960-61 season.

Hawks guard Wesley Matthews (right calf) sank two 3-pointers in the third quarter and scored seven points in his first game of the season. Matthews' father, Wesley Matthews Sr., played a combined 152 games with Atlanta (1980-83, 84 and 1990). They become the first father-son duo to play for the Hawks.

The Hawks debuted their fly city edition uniform which included the blue accent used in their 1968 first Atlanta uniform.

MAGIC 112, BUCKS 97

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Paolo Banchero had 26 points and 12 rebounds, Orlando's Wagner brothers combined for 43 points and the Magic dealt the Milwaukee Bucks their second straight loss, 112-97 on Saturday night.

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo had 35 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists, two nights after a 54-point effort in Thursday's loss at Indiana.

The Bucks played a second game without Damian Lillard, who has a sore left calf.

Franz Wagner scored 24 for the Magic and Mo Wagner came off the bench with 19 points and four rebounds. Jalen Suggs hit 4 of 8 3-point shots and added 20 points.

The loss broke Milwaukee's 14-game win streak against the Magic and marked the Bucks first loss in Orlando since March 14, 2018.

CELTICS 117, RAPTORS 94

BOSTON (AP)—Jaylen Brown scored 29 points, Jayson Tatum had 27 and Boston cruised past Toronto.

Kristaps Porzingis added 21 points and seven rebounds in 28 minutes for the Celtics, who won their second straight after a 14-point victory over Brooklyn in their first NBA In-Season Tournament game on Friday night.

Pascal Siakam led the Raptors with 17 points and seven rebounds. Dennis Schroder had 14 points and Jakob Poeltl 12.

Toronto, which had won its last two games—both on the road—shot just 10 for 37 on 3-point attempts.

CAVALIERS 118, WARRIORS 110

SAN FRANCSICO (AP)—Donovan Mitchell got the best of Golden State and Draymond Green, finishing with 21 points, seven rebounds, five assists and a pair of steals for Cleveland in a game in which Green was ejected.

Stephen Curry scored 30 points to lead the Warriors, who lost fiery forward Green at the 6:23 mark of the third quarter with eight points, five rebounds and four assists.

Green pushed Mitchell with his shoulder and sent him out of bounds as Cleveland's Caris LeVert drove for a layup. Then, as Green brought the ball across midcourt moments later, Mitchell chased him down and instigated a heated interaction—and Mitchell was called for a personal foul.

LeVert scored 22 points, and Darius Garland contributed 19 points, six rebounds, four assists with five steals. Evan Mobley added 19 points and two more of his team's season-high 13 steals in one of the most balanced performances by Cleveland yet this season.

Iguodala takes over as acting executive director of NBA players' union

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP BASKETBALL WRITER

Andre Iguodala is taking over as the acting executive director of the National Basketball Players Association after the resignation of Tamika Tremaglio, the union announced Thursday.

Tremaglio, the union said, is "stepping down from the position to pursue new opportunities." The NBPA's executive committee has approved Iguodala's appointment, the union said.

Tremaglio was not even two full years into her four-year term as executive director. It was not immediately clear if Iguodala, the four-time NBA champion who retired after last season and was a longtime union officer, would be interested in the job in a permanent capacity.

The change atop the union seemed to come as a surprise, given that Tremaglio revealed on Tuesday that she had just met with the Indiana Pacers—the second team she visited with this season, following time with the Atlanta Hawks in October—and was planning to be back in Indianapolis for All-Star weekend in February.

"I am honored to take on this role and serve the players, who are the heart and soul of the NBA," Iguodala said in a release distributed by the union.

While the NBA and the NBPA are in constant communication about various matters, the biggest issue that the sides deal with won't be a major topic for several years. The league and its players are still in the opening months of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement that will be in place through at least Oct. 15, 2028, and perhaps through the 2029-30 season.

"His leadership on the NBPA Executive Committee was imperative to multiple rounds of CBA negotiations, and he has empowered our players to think like the business titans they are," Tremaglio wrote of Iguodala on social media last month.

NBA BRIEFS

LeBron pokes fun at Michigan and coach Jim Harbaugh for sign-stealing scandal

PHOENIX (AP)—Even NBA star LeBron James is relishing the chance to tease Michigan over its college football sign-stealing scandal. The 19-time All-Star took a light-hearted swipe at the Wolverines and coach Jim Harbaugh in the aftermath of the Los Angeles Lakers' win over the Phoenix Suns on Friday night. James grew up in Ohio, home to Michigan's biggest rival: Ohio State. He said the Lakers were able to decipher some of Suns coach Frank Vogel's signals on the sideline because the team is familiar with him. Vogel coached the Lakers when they won their 2020 title in the NBA's Florida bubble. "The best thing about tonight is we were able to get those signals and we'll still be able to play on Sunday," James said, referring to his team's next game. "We won't get suspended, like that team up north." The Big Ten Conference banned Harbaugh from coaching at Michigan's three remaining regular-season games on Friday, escalating an extraordinary confrontation with college football's winningest program over a sign-stealing scheme that has rocked the sport. The discipline was announced less than 24 hours before kickoff at No. 9 Penn State. The second-ranked Wolverines (9-0) have a shot to win a third straight Big Ten title and the school's first national championship since 1997.

76ers guard Kelly Oubre Jr. hit by vehicle in Philly, to miss 'significant' time

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Philadelphia 76ers guard Kelly Oubre Jr. sustained undisclosed injuries after being struck by a vehicle Saturday, the team said, and is expected to miss significant playing time. The 27-year-old Oubre was transported to a hospital in stable condition after being hit, and released a few hours later. The teams says he is not expected to miss the rest of the season, but did not provide information on his injuries. The Sixers said Oubre was walking near his residence in downtown Philadelphia when he was struck. The Philadelphia Police said in an email to The Associated Press that Oubre was struck at about 7 p.m. while crossing the street at Broad and Locust streets in Center City, and that he was taken to Jefferson Hospital. Police said there is an active investigation into the incident. 6ABC in Philadelphia reported police saying a silver vehicle fled the scene after the accident. Oubre is in his first season with the 76ers and has averaged 16.8 points in the first eight games. He was the 15th overall pick of the 2015 draft and has played with four other teams. The 76ers are home Sunday and play Indiana.

Wizards' Delon Wright has sprained knee, will be re-evaluated in 3 weeks

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Washington Wizards announced Saturday that backup guard Delon Wright has a sprained left knee and will be re-evaluated in three weeks. The team said the injury would be treated "conservatively" after Wright was hurt in the fourth quarter of Friday night's loss to Charlotte. The 31-year-old Wright has averaged 17.6 minutes and 5.0 points per game this season. Washington plays at Brooklyn on Sunday.

Bears beat Panthers, 16-13, to boost shot at top pick in draft

CHICAGO (AP)—The Chicago Bears weren't too concerned about appearances. All that mattered was that they came out on top.

D'Onta Foreman ran for a touchdown and the Bears boosted their shot at the top pick in the draft, beating the Carolina Panthers 16-13 on Thursday night.

"At the end of the day, man, all the hard work we put in, even with it not being pretty it still feels amazing," Foreman said. "You know what I mean?"

The prime-time matchup between teams among the bottom five in the NFL delivered about as much drama as expected. But Chicago (3-7) made enough plays to come away with the victory.

The Bears also boosted their chances at the No. 1 pick because they have Carolina's first-rounder in 2024. They acquired the pick along with Moore last March for the top selection this year. The Panthers (1-8) are tied with Arizona — which plays Atlanta on Sunday — for the worst record in the NFL.

Foreman gave the Bears a 16-10 lead in the third quarter with a 4-yard run. Chicago was up by three with 1:40 remaining in the game when Carolina's Eddy Pineiro missed a 59-yard field goal, the ball landing well short of the goal post. The Bears sealed the win when Darnell Mooney caught an 8-yard pass on third-and-seven at the 48.

AP

Chicago Bears quarterback Tyson Bagent (17) slides behind Carolina Panthers cornerback Troy Hill (13) during the first half of an NFL football game Thursday, Nov. 9, 2023, in Chicago.

Moore caught five passes for 58 yards against his former team.

Tyson Bagent completed 20 of 33 passes for 162 yards in his fourth straight start with Justin Fields sidelined because of a dislocated right thumb. The Bears are 2-2 with the undrafted rookie from Division II Shepherd University in West Virginia in the lineup.

Fields hasn't played since he exited a Week 6 loss to Minnesota. Eberflus has said repeatedly he remains the Bears' No. 1 quarterback. But he wouldn't say if he expects Fields to return next week at Detroit.

"We'll see where it is," Eberflus said. "It's a big week to make that evaluation, so we'll see where it is. When Justin's healthy, he'll be our starter."

Cairo Santos kicked three field goals. The Bears got their pass rush going, sacking Bryce Young three times. It was a big improvement for a team with a league-low 10 through the first nine games.

"They got swagger," said defensive end Montez Sweat, who had three quarterback hits in his second game since a trade-deadline deal from Washington. "All these guys, I really love kind of like the plug and play. I'm really going along with them trying to figure out the energy that they're bringing."

PANTHERS FALL

Carolina's Ihmir Smith-Marsette returned a punt 79 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter. But Young, coming off his worst game as a pro, had another rough outing. The No. 1 draft pick this year, he was 21 of 38 for 185 yards with a 68.4 rating, after throwing three interceptions and having two returned for scores in a loss to Indianapolis.

Adam Thielen caught six passes for 42 yards, and the Panthers fell to 0-5 on the road.

"We have to be better," Young said. "Our defense, great game, start to finish. We have to be better. I have to be better first and foremost. I have to be better first and foremost. I have to be a lot better."

JUMPING AHEAD

The Bears grabbed a 16-10 lead midway through the third on a 4-yard run by Foreman–who spent last season with Carolina–to cap a 38-yard drive after pinning the Panthers deep in their own territory. Chicago opted not to try a 2-point conversion to go up by seven.

Carolina got a big opportunity late in the third, taking over at the Chicago 40 after Trenton Gill shanked a punt. The Panthers got pushed back 20 yards to start the drive because of back-to-back penalties, then got to the 20 before Pineiro kicked a field goal to make it a three-point game early in the fourth.

SLOW START

The Panthers led 10-9 at halftime even though the Bears outgained them 205 yards to 97. Chicago ran 42 plays, but settled for three field goals by Santos.

Smith-Marsette, who played part of last season in Chicago, gave the Panthers a 7-0 lead in the first quarter when he returned a punt 79 yards for a touchdown. He broke a tackle by Josh Blackwell, cut through the middle and used a hesitation move to get past punter Trenton Gill for his first career TD return.

Chicago answered with a 54-yard field goal by Santos. Former Bear Pineiro kicked a 33-yarder early in the second quarter to make it a seven-point game. Santos booted two more field goals, hitting a 36-yarder with just over three minutes left and 39-yarder as time expired, to make it a one-point game.

Eagles enter bye week with best record at 8-1 behind hobbled Hurts

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Jalen Hurts keeps the playbook confidential. As for his go-to music playlist, the Philadelphia Eagles quarterback is an open book.

He likes slow jams. The smooth stylings of R&B. You know, cool music. Calm music.

Al Green and Anita Baker. Tony! Toni! Toné! and New Edition.

Old soul kind of tunes.

"I just keep a running list of songs that I can go to 24/7, no matter the scenario," Hurts wrote this week as he shared his favorite songs with a music streaming service.

How's this for a scenario: The Philadelphia Eagles would not mind if Hurts stuck in some AirPods, chilled out and listened to 4 hours, 14 minutes of all 50 songs in his set. Anything to stay off his feet.

For one week, at least, Hurts gets to take a knee on football.

The Eagles QB has played with a bruised left knee for at least three games—when exactly he was injured, Hurts won't say—and that has left him hobbled, often diminishing his run game.

It almost doesn't matter. Yes, the Eagles want Hurts as close to full strength as he can be when their season resumes Nov. 20 in a Super Bowl rematch against the Kansas City Chiefs. Generally loathe to reveal much about his health, Hurts did acknowledge the off week couldn't have come at a better time. He's banged up and could use a breather.

But the reality is, bad knee or not, Hurts has been wonderful in the pocket, while leading the Eagles to the best record in the NFL at 8-1. Over the last three games, all wins, Hurts has thrown eight touchdowns against just one interception. He has completed at least 74% of his passes in each of those starts.

"It's just him getting more and more comfortable with the plays that he's running and that he likes, and knowing where to go with the football," Eagles coach Nick Sirianni said.

Thanks in large part to the "tush push," Hurts has still rushed for seven touchdowns this season.

Hurts has played through pain and has yet to even make the injury report. Perhaps that could change next week. The potential culprit? A hand cramp after Hurts signed jerseys, photos, helmets and more this week at a private event.

Hey, at least he got to sit.

Hurts' numbers over the last two seasons are staggering for any quarterback, much less the 53rd overall pick of the 2020 draft. Hurts has the Eagles at 8-1 for the second straight season. The Eagles are 25-2 in the last 27 regular-season games started by him.

Hurts has justified the Eagles' faith in him and has them at 5-1 odds to win a Super Bowl. In April, the Eagles rewarded Hurts with a $255 million, five-year contract extension that briefly was the richest in NFL history.

Up next, the 25-year-old Hurts and the Eagles revisit an agonizing part of franchise history when they head to Kansas City, Missouri. Hurts became the only QB to lose the Super Bowl while leading his team to at least 35 points. He threw for 304 yards and one TD with 70 yards rushing and three scores. But he also lost a fumble that was returned for a TD in a 38-35 loss to Patrick Mahomes and the Chiefs.

Hurts could only watch from the sideline as Mahomes drove the Chiefs to the go-ahead field goal with 8 seconds remaining.

Winning it all is all that matters for Hurts.

"I have this demeanor here. I have this hunger in my heart," Hurts said. "So we're sitting here 8-1. So that's a very great feeling. Yet it's about winning, but it's about the standard, too. So we just want to continue to raise that standard and play to the standard. Play the type of ball we want to play."

His standard includes staying mum on his injury. Hurts first wore a knee brace in the second half of an Oct. 22 win over Miami. He said he suffered the bruised knee ahead of the game. The Eagles—and fans—held their breath for a moment in Sunday's win over Dallas when Hurts was sacked by Micah Parsons in the waning moments of the first half. He was shaken and stumbled to the sideline, but never missed a play after a timeout gave him a respite to pull himself together.

Hurts got a longer break this week.

"We're going to give all the guys rest and he'll be one of the guys that benefits from our rest," Sirianni said. "It's an important week for us to self-scout, and an important week for our players to take some time away from the game."

There's plenty of time to fire-up the hype machine. The Chiefs added a new fan since the Super Bowl. Might have heard of her: Taylor Swift. Donna Kelce will surely be at Arrowhead Stadium cheering on her sons—Swift's buddy and Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce and his brother, Eagles center Jason Kelce. For the bandwagon fans who just know the Kelces from their extracurricular pursuits, that would be, of course, Jason Kelce, named this week one of People magazine's sexiest men alive.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," Jason Kelce wrote on social media.

These days, nothing is as alluring in Philly as an 8-1 record.

NMI swimmers eye finals spots, podium finish

The goal for the NMI National Swim Team members is to have as many finals appearances as they can have in their respective races in the 2023 Pacific Games in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The newly-built swimming facility at the host country will be flooded with swimmers, including the strong 14-person NMI National Swim Team, and with a full field, competitions will be very tough and coach Richard Sikkel and Hiro Kimura said the squad are setting their sights on reaching the finals in their events.

"The NMI Swimming Federation has set the goal to have as many NMI swimmers earn a spot in their event finals," said Sikkel.

The NMI National Team is led by Team Marianas flagbearer Isaiah Aleksenko and collegiate standout Juhn Tenorio. Completing the squad are Taiyo Akimaru, Maria Batallones Kevin Guerrero, Julia Jinang, Shoko Litulumar, Michael Miller, Andrew Nunez, Kean Pajarillaga, Frances Raho, Moshe Sikkel, Nagi Tenorio, and Kouki Watanabe. Yuko Kimura is the team manager.

The swimming competition will run from Nov. 20 to 24 with nearly 200 entries from 14 countries listed for the event.

"There have been cases in the past Pacific Games where the number of participants was too small and all registered swimmers were able to advance to the finals without qualifying. This time, there will be a lot of swimmers in Honiara, and for us, the goal is to get as many NMI swimmers as possible to the finals. The Pacific Games will be a battle between the pride of big island nations and pride of small island-nations in terms of swimming program," Hiro Kimura said.

Coach Kimura is talking about the "big island" and powerhouse swim teams of New Caledonia and Tahiti, which each registered 23 swimmers in their rosters. Solomon Islands and Fiji also have 20-plus swimmers each, while the NMI's neighbor, Guam, signed up 17. Palau, Vanuatu, and Papua New Guinea each have more than 10 swimmers, while the Federated States of Micronesia, Tonga, and Samoa listed nine each. Cook Islands will have four, while American Samoa has a lone entry in the swimming competition.

Both Kimura and Sikkel are positive of the NMI swimmers' chances to make it to the medal podium in individual and relay races, while all swimmers are expected to earn personal best times, and many are anticipated to establish age group and national records.

The NMI swimmers and the rest of Team Marianas delegation will leave Saipan for Honiara this Wednesday. The 2023 Pacific Games will kick off on Nov. 19 and will run until Dec. 2. Team Marianas is supported by Joeten Daidai Foundation, Triple J, Crowne Plaza Resort, IT&E, IP&E, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Mobil, Tan Holdings, and McDonald's of Saipan & Guam. ***(PR)***

LEO

From page 20

pete in triathlons—it's something I love to do."

Besides competing in Honiara, Wania said he is participating in a triathlon officiating course, after which he can be a certified triathlon official and will be able to officiate the sport wherever they might need one.

For the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games, Wania, along with Isaiah Aleksenko, Kathy Ruszala, and Heather Brook, took home the bronze medal.

Besides triathlon, Team Marianas is competing in nine other sports: volleyball, tennis, weightlifting, va'a, golf, athletics, swimming, bodybuilding, and soccer.

Tarkong's message

Before the presentation of athletes, va'a coach/athlete Jason Tarkong made his special remarks.

He said that the athletes have worked so hard and sacrificed a lot to get where they are. He added that they will be far from home and will be celebrating Thanksgiving away from family.

He added that despite their sacrifices, "We have a great opportunity to participate against the region's best." He then quoted Muhammad Ali and said, "Don't quit, suffer now, and live the rest of your life as a champion."

LEIGH GASES

CNMI's longtime athlete and va'a coach/athlete Jason Tarkong gives his special remarks during the Pacific Games sendoff ceremony last Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CHECKPOINT

From page 20

Checkpoint team captain Aranda said after the game, "the finals game was great. Honestly, tonight was a team effort. The boys brought out the energy. They did really well tonight and kudos to the team." As for Easy Riders, he said, "I put my hands up and my hat's off to Easy Riders. They're a great team, you know, but tonight I think we played phenomenal."

He said there was actually not much of a strategy going up against Easy Riders, "It was more like giving the time to the boys that didn't play. So tonight, I wasn't really worried because I know my teammates can play the game as well. Hat's off to my teammates because they did a phenomenal job tonight."

He added that the turning point of the game was toward the third quarter when they started to pull further away from the Easy Riders. "They were fighting back, but I think the boys holding their composure was the best part about this team."

He then thanked their sponsor Checkpoint and the Eagles Club for a great tournament. Checkpoint was coached by Erwin Lumanlan and Albert Agustin.

Results of the master's division championships and other awards will be posted in the next editions of *Saipan Tribune.*

Checkpoint 83 – C. Santos 19, K. Santos 15, Castro 12, Flores 8, Kim 8, Aranda 8, Sablan 6, Quan 4, Dela Cruz 2, Camacho 1.

Easy Riders 58 – Ferrer 17, Diwa 13, Camacho 12, Velasco 8, Directo 2, Padayao 2, Ashburn 2, De Guzman 2.

Scoring by quarters: 18-11, 34-22, 50-39, 83-58.

LEIGH GASES

Checkpoint's Jeff Castro goes for a jumper but is fouled by Easy Riders' Cris Diwa during their winner-take-all championship game in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Saturday night at a jam-packed Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

PIXLEY

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of 38:41, while Kerri Bauer, along with her baby, topped the women's with a time of 1:00:36.

The women's 40-44 saw Angela Taflinger come first with 47:52; Shiela Isla was second with 52:11; and third was Cherie Moses at 52:32.

Chad Taflinger was first in the men's 40-44 at 38:03; followed by Beau Bauer with 48:47.

Jess Gariguez was the lone runner in the men's 45-49 age group, with a time of 1:04:54.

LEIGH GASES

Participants of the 2nd Annual Run Saipan's Saipan International Airport 8K cross country run pose for a photo after the race last Saturday.

In the men's 50-54, James Abuy was also the lone runner at 46:37.

For the women's 50-54, Jessica Ortizo was the fastest at 46:23; and Marilou Carlos was second at 51:46.

Cary Bertocini was the fastest men's 55-59 runner at 45:54; and Dr. Ron Snyder was right behind with dog Gilligan at 47:10.

And in the 60-69 division, barefoot runner Chong Nam Lee ran the fastest at 45:32; Paul Khang was second at 50:31; and another barefoot runner, Changwhan Jang. was third at 51:47.

Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. thanked the Commonwealth Ports Authority "for partnering with us again this year on highlighting our beautiful airport. The airport route is very beautiful and one of our veteran runners' favorite courses. Thank you for your support and we look forward to next year again."

"Thanks to Northern Marianas Athletics, the Department of Public Safety, the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter and our officials for another great event. And thank you to Saipan Tribune for sharing our story," said Dela Cruz.

Results of the Veterans Day 5K cross country run will be published in tomorrow's edition of *Saipan Tribune.*

Athletics considering Pacific Games as prep for Micro Games

With not much competitions available for the NMI athletes at this time, Northern Marianas Athletics coach Elias Rangamar said they will use the events in the 2023 Pacific Games to prepare for next year's Micronesian Games.

The Northern Marianas Athletics will send eight delegates—seven athletes and one team official—to the track and field competition in the 2023 Pacific Games, which Honiara, Solomon Islands is hosting from Nov. 19 to Dec. 2, 2023. The athletics event will run from Nov. 27 to Dec. 2, 2023.

"Since they moved the schedule of the Pacific Games to November, I am interested to know how athletes will perform because it's offseason for majority of the athletes. With this factor and with limited local competitions, we will have the races and events in Solomons as preparations for the Micronesian Games," Rangamar said.

Tania Tan, Theodore Rodgers, Pony Tang, Maria Quitugua, Casey Cruz, Alexander Camacho, and Lyle Pedro Andrew will represent Team Marianas in the athletics competition, while Greg Iginoef will accompany the group as team manager.

"We have young athletes on our field and they've been doing well in training. We' targeting some PBs (personal bests) and notable performances from Tania, who has been actively competing this year, and Theo is doing very well in sprints training," Rangamar said.

All seven athletes also represented the NMI in the Oceania Cup that Saipan hosted in July this year with Tan and Tang making it to the podium in their respective events. In Honiara, Tan is entered in the 5,000m, 10,000m, and half marathon races; Quitugua will join the 100m run and javelin throw; Cruz is competing in 100m and 200m races; Andrew is entered in hammer and discus throws; Camacho will do the 100m race and long jump; Rodgers is racing in the 100m and 200m events; and Tang will join the 800m and 1,500m races and 3,000m steeple chase.

The NMI track and field athletes will be competing against the representatives of 20 other countries, including early favorites New Zealand, Australia, Papua New Guinea.

The athletics team and the rest of the Team Marianas delegation are supported by Joeten Daidai Foundation, Triple J, Crowne Plaza Resort, IT&E, IP&E, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Mobil, Tan Holdings, and McDonald's of Guam & Saipan. ***(PR)***

Adebayo scores 26 points as depleted Heat show off depth in win vs Hawks.

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Sports

NMI swimmers eye finals spots, podium finish.

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Checkpoint upsets Easy Riders in open finals

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

LEIGH GASES
Checkpoint takes a group photo after their championship win against Easy Riders in the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 last Saturday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

Checkpoint cleared the area and paved the way for a huge 83-58 win over erstwhile undefeated Easy Riders in the winner-take-all championships of the Inaugural SMEC-SMLEG Invitational Basketball Tournament 2023 late into last Saturday night at a jam-packed Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

There were crises on the court as tensions were high from hotly contested foul calls that wreaked havoc on a foul-riddled Easy Riders team.

Toward the end of the last quarter, Checkpoint already had a huge 76-58 lead. After a few technical call toward Easy Riders, tensions flared up even more and the game stalled for a few minutes as referees held a discussion.

It didn't matter anyway as Checkpoint's Jeff Castro missed all his free throws. From there, with less than two minutes left, Easy Riders had abandoned ship and wasted time as they showed no effort toward making a basket anymore until the final seconds ran out.

Meanwhile, 7 more points were made by Checkpoint's Coby Santos and Tony Kim.

From the opening jump ball, both teams were evenly matched as they had previously gone up against each other in the semis and it was clear that it was going to be a rough four quarters that would leave spectators on the edge of their seats.

Checkpoint's Coby Santos set up the plays almost perfectly every time as the once-powerful Easy Riders were brought to their knees by apparent missed calls and missed opportunities.

Checkpoint had more open shots that were converted from downtown and from inside the paint, with Keith and Coby Santos a threat with their offensive push and Juan Camacho and Sid Quan's halfcourt presses and man-to-man defense—while Easy Riders' rush plays and drives came up mostly empty-handed.

It was the beginning of the end for Easy Riders as the second half dawned with Checkpoint landing 3-point after 3-point shot by Jack Aranda, Kim, Castro, and Coby, and their defense holding up against an aggressive and hot-headed Easy Riders team.

Easy Riders didn't give up and tried to close in from a once 11-point Checkpoint lead that they whittled down to 7 points in the second quarter, but they couldn't do more damage as turnovers and interceptions were converted into buckets by Checkpoint held them at bay.

In the end, Coby racked up 19 points, Keith Santos scored 15, and Jeff Castro collected 12 markers. For Easy Riders, Frank Ferrer came away with 17 points, Cris Diwa made 13, and Austin Camacho put up 12 points.

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Pixley, King-Hinds top 8K cross country run

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Rex Pixley and Kimberlyn King-Hinds were the overall winners of their respective categories in the 8K open division of Run Saipan's first Saipan International Airport Trail Run which also served as the CNMI's cross country championship.

In the men's division, the 17-year-old Pixley outran everyone with a time of 33:24, while King-Hinds was the fastest woman on the course with a time of 41:20 in the cross country course that spanned the perimeter line of the Francisco M. Palacios/Saipan International Airport.

Behind Pixley was fellow Marianas High School Dolphin Pony Tang at 33:42, while Samuel Zhu completed the Top 3 with a time of 34:16.

After King-Hinds was Rosemarie Chisato at 44:18 and Ann Bang with a time of 44:54.

For Pixley, he said he really enjoyed the course. "It was a nice cross country course around the whole runway and it felt really good." He said it was the first time he's joined this race and heard about it from Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr.'s social media post. As this was also alongside the Veterans 5K race, Pixley dedicated his win to his brother, Jason, who served in the U.S. Navy.

For King-Hinds, she said the course was "really tough. It had different terrains—you're going on- and off-road and then the elevation—there are some really nice small hills. And so, it's a very challenging course. I think it's a good way to start warming up if you're interested in doing the marathon and getting involved in races like this super year for long distance running. It's so awesome."

She added that she didn't think she would be the first woman to finish the course because she thought she was going to gas out halfway, "because I'm not a trained runner, I'm just a fun runner."

In the 35-39 men's division, Matthew Giovannoni topped it with a run

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Leo Wania is solo triathlete for Pacific Games

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

In a big undertaking, veteran triathlete Leo Wania is Team Marianas' solo representative for triathlon in the Pacific Mini Games in Honiara, Solomon Islands that will be held from Nov. 19 to Dec. 2.

Triathlon consists of the trifecta of swimming, cycling, and running.

Wania said in an interview after the Pacific Games sendoff ceremony last Wednesday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, despite being the lone wolf, he is excited to compete in his first Pacific Games since 1999.

"I'm very excited. This is the first time in a long time that I'm going to participate in the Pacific Games. It's quite a challenging order to take, going by myself as a solo triathlete. I'm feeling good about it—I'll just do my best."

As for his training, he said he's been in contact with his coach, Mick Ferris, from Australia—who also helped coach the CNMI triathletes during the 2022 Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games. "He has been giving me some pointers for my solo training, so for now, it's pretty good," he said.

On why he's the only athlete for triathlon, he said the other athletes are competing in other sports where they feel they have better chances for winning gold. He said others didn't participate due to family ties. "That's the thing about sports. You have to sacrifice your family for sports, and fortunately for me, my kids are pretty much adults and I have time to com-

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LEIGH GASES
CNMI triathlete Leo Wania holds up his left index finger to show he's the lone triathlete competing in the Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands from Nov. 19 to Dec. 2 during the Pacific Games sendoff ceremony at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Wednesday.